Hafa Adai!

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Low remittances due to factory shutdowns. **PAGE 2**

Man in 8 burglaries gets a month in prison. **PAGE 5**

Investor decision cited for scaling down casino project

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

A ranking Bridge Investment Group official said that various factors played a hand in their decision to pare down their initial $200-million investment in the Tinian Oceanview Resort and Condominiums to just $40-$50 million.

Erik F. Wang did not go into detail about the company's decision but said that the $40-$50 million investment is not set and could even go higher.

"That's just investor decision. It's not to say that that is where the final investment is going to pan out at. As we go along, the investment may increase based on how we are looking at the project. Any ancillary development that needs to be done

See INVESTOR on Page 4

Federalization bill hits snag

US Senate vote on measure may be delayed

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The bill placing local immigration under federal control has fallen off track after it got mired in the gun control debate and national politics.

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Volcanic haze coming from Anatahan covers the high grounds of Kagman yesterday.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Volcanic haze blankets Saipan, Tinian

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The characteristic smell of sulfur—like rotting eggs or an open sewer—saturated the air yesterday due to winds blowing the volcanic haze from Anatahan to the islands of Saipan and Tinian, prompting the government to issue an alert.

The Department of Public Health urged people with respiratory problems to remain indoors until the haze and odor are dispersed.

No private and public schools were closed, but outdoor activities were cancelled. Teachers and officials advised students to cover their mouths and noses with handkerchiefs when outside the classrooms.

In the health advisory that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial issued at 9:33am yesterday, he said the volcanic haze may cause breathing difficulties.

Fitial also advised mariners to avoid the Anatahan area.

See VOLCANIC on Page 4

NMC explains to lawmakers status of accreditation

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez and the Board of Regents met with lawmakers yesterday to explain to them how the college came to the point where it now faces the danger of losing its accreditation.

Fernandez

Fernandez presented to the Legislature a historical glance at NMC's progression with the Western Association of Schools & Colleges Accrediting Commission through the years. It showed that NMC had never really attended to its program assessment and student learning programs since 1990.

See NMC on Page 4

OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you intend to celebrate Valentine's Day this year?

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to cast your vote.

INSIDE

New Member
Lourdes "Lou" A. Leon Guerrero is the newest member of the GTA TeleGuam board of directors.

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State of Emergency
East Timor's leaders placed the country under a state of emergency after rebels critically wounded the president.

ASIA...Page 16

Diva Showdown
The contestants in the Grand Diva Lip Sync Contest will have a showdown tonight at Club V.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Local

Low remittances due to factory shutdowns

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Low remittance figures in 2007 was partly a result of the continued exodus of the islands' once-mighty garment industry.

According to Department of Commerce acting secretary Michael Ada the decline in remittances last year was also a result of the closure of four remittance centers.

"In addition to the closure of some remittance centers, there has been a decline in the actual individuals remitting money. This is due in large part to the exit of the garment industry, which employed a large portion of the individuals who remitted back to their home country," he said in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Overseas remittances went down 8.4 percent decline from $102.2 million to $93.6 million in 2007.

The remittance figures last year were the lowest since Commerce reported total remittances of $80.5 million in 2003. The following two years, remittances increased by double figures—17.5 percent to $94.6 million in 2004 and 19 percent to $112.6 million in 2005.

The outflow of overseas money, however, began to shrink the next year, 2006, when Commerce reported a 9.2-percent drop in remittances to the aforementioned $102.2 million.

Four remittance companies closed their business in 2007, namely America Joint-Partner Corporation, Micronesia Money Exchange Co., Oceania Remittance Center, Yun Mee Corporation.

The garment industry, meanwhile, saw the exodus of four factories last year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy second birthday to Vicente Jose Babauta Reyes, who celebrates his special day today, Feb. 14, 2008. Love and miss you, son! From your daddy Maynard, Nana Darlene and Grandpa Joe.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Saipan, Tinian arrivals up, Rota arrivals down

2By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Tourist arrivals to Saipan and Tinian increased, while Rota's was down in the first month of 2008.

According to the latest figures from the Marianas Visitors Authority, arrivals to Saipan inched up by .03 percent to 37,755 from the 37,620 tourists that came to the capital of the CNMI in January 2007.

Japanese tourists continued to command the largest share of the Saipan market with 19,468 arrivals last month. The figure, however, is down six percent from the 20,681 tourists from the Land of the Rising Sun in January 2007

Arrivals from Korea continued its rise, increasing by 11 percent to 11,212 last month, compared to 9,927 in the same period a year before.

The markets of Russia (43 percent), Guam (21 percent), and the United States (nine percent) recorded growth in January 2008, but were offset by the negative growth in the markets of the Philippines (-63 percent), China (-10 percent), Others (-10 percent), and Taiwan (-4 percent).

Meanwhile, Tinian got a boost from the resumption of Shanghai-Saipan flights of China Eastern Airlines in January 2008 and saw its tourist arrivals grow to 27 percent to 5,225 from the 4,124 recorded in the same period last year.

Tourists from the Middle Kingdom were responsible for the lion's share of the increase, as 2,815 Chinese tourists visited Tinian in January 2008, a 65-percent improvement on the 1,705 that visited the island in the same period in 2007.

Tourists from Guam also grew by 47 percent, followed by the Korea market, which rose 39 percent.

Less tourists, meanwhile, came from Others (-53 percent), Saipan (-34 percent), the United States (-27 percent), and Japan (-3 percent).

Rota, on the other hand, saw its visitor arrival figure drop to its bleakest in the fiscal year, as only 364 visited the island last month.

That represents a 59-percent drop from the 886 recorded in January 2007. Only visitors from the United States showed growth (46 percent), while the markets of China (-100 percent), the Philippines (-100 percent), Others (-18 percent), Japan (-13 percent) Guam (-12 percent) all reported losses.

Govt trainings centralized

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has ordered government training centralized under a new agency.

In a memorandum yesterday, Fitial said all employee training within the CNMI government will be coordinated and managed by the Office of Director of Training, led by Peter C. Eche.

The centralization includes policy-related employee development training, which is currently under the Office of Personnel Management.

The training director will now approve all government training and training projects, including contracts, travel and associated costs.

According to the governor, the change is also intended to assist Northern Marianas College to remain focused on its academic and curriculum programs.

Fitial said the intent is not to hinder any training efforts, but simply to coordinate and properly manage training projects and expenditures with accountability.

"As all of you know, we are operating under extreme financial constraints and therefore need to constantly examine our programs, efficiencies and spending. This effort includes institutionalizing training within the CNMI government. I have concluded that regardless of the financial stresses, we must continue to grow and continue to train and develop our organization," he said. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

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Motion to disqualify Demapan 'a cheap shot'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Lawyer Antonio Atalig said yesterday that Stephen Nutting's motion to disqualify chief justice Miguel S. Demapan from their appeal in the Angel Malite case "is a cheap shot" and "an attack on the integrity of the Judiciary."

Atalig said Nutting, whom he called a "loose cannon," deserves severe sanction from the CNMI Supreme Court for filing that motion.

"Mr. Nutting has run out of bullets. He is just a loose cannon shooting aimlessly. As soon as he runs out of bullets, he is over," Atalig told *Saipan Tribune*.

The lawyer said chief justice Demapan should not be disqualified from participating in the appeal because there is no ground for disqualification.

In an amended order issued by the Superior Court, associate judge Kenneth Govendo found Atalig and attorney Reynaldo O. Yana in contempt of court and suspended them from practicing law for failing to return to the court the $1.3 million in attorney's fees that had been awarded them in the Malite probate.

Govendo also kicked out Jesus C. Tudela as the estate administrator for mismanagement.

Yana and Atalig appealed to the Supreme Court.

Last Friday, the high court stopped the suspension of Yana and Atalig and set an oral argument on March 11, 2008. The order was issued by chief justice Demapan and associate justices Alexandro C. Castro and John A. Manglona.

The heirs, through Nutting, moved to intervene into the high court proceeding. They also requested for the disqualification of Demapan from the proceeding.

Nutting cited that Demapan should be disqualified because his brother, Roman Demapan, received $200,000 from the $1.3 million in attorney's fees in the Malite probate.

Nutting asserted that the Commonwealth law prohibits any judge from handling a case in which any person with which he has "second degree of relationship" has "an interest that could be substantially affected by the outcome of the proceeding."

He also cited that Atalig is chief justice Demapan's former law partner.

In his response yesterday, Atalig said the Roman Demapan and chief justice Demapan brothers issue is another example of Nutting's "loose cannon attitude."

"What does the petition for writ of prohibition on the issue of law practice and suspension has anything to do with Roman Demapan's receiving money because of his services in my law office? Even though he is the brother of chief justice Demapan, where is the conflict?," Atalig said.

"In this island, you have to make a distinction. Just because you see that there is a horse and there is another horse does not mean that the horses are going together," he said.

Atalig said the issue is about law practice and that jurisdiction falls within the Supreme Court. "So the issue is my law license, not Roman Demapan's license," he pointed out.

On the law firm partnership issue, Atalig said that was more than 16 to 17 years ago. He said the partnership has nothing to do with the case now before the Supreme Court. Atalig said he appeared before chief justice Demapan in other cases in the past.

The lawyer said the partnership issue is a very cheap shot and that Nutting deserves sanction on that too.

Besides, Atalig said, Nutting was a former partner of associate justice John A. Manglona at attorney Mike White's office long time ago. "I am not making an issue of that because I don't see any relationship that something happened between Mr. Nutting and Manglona long time ago has anything to do with this present case," he pointed out.

On the allegations that he and Yana misused the appellate procedures, Atalig said the motion to intervene is a frivolous one.

"If it is a misuse of appellate procedure, obviously he is wrong because in our filing of the petition for writ of prohibition on the suspension order, the Supreme Court granted our petition," he said.

Atalig said they are seeking sanctions against Nutting for filing such a frivolous motion.

"What does Mr. Nutting's interest in our license to practice law? He does not have any protectible property interest in our license to practice law. Mr. Nutting has no business in our suspension issue," he said.

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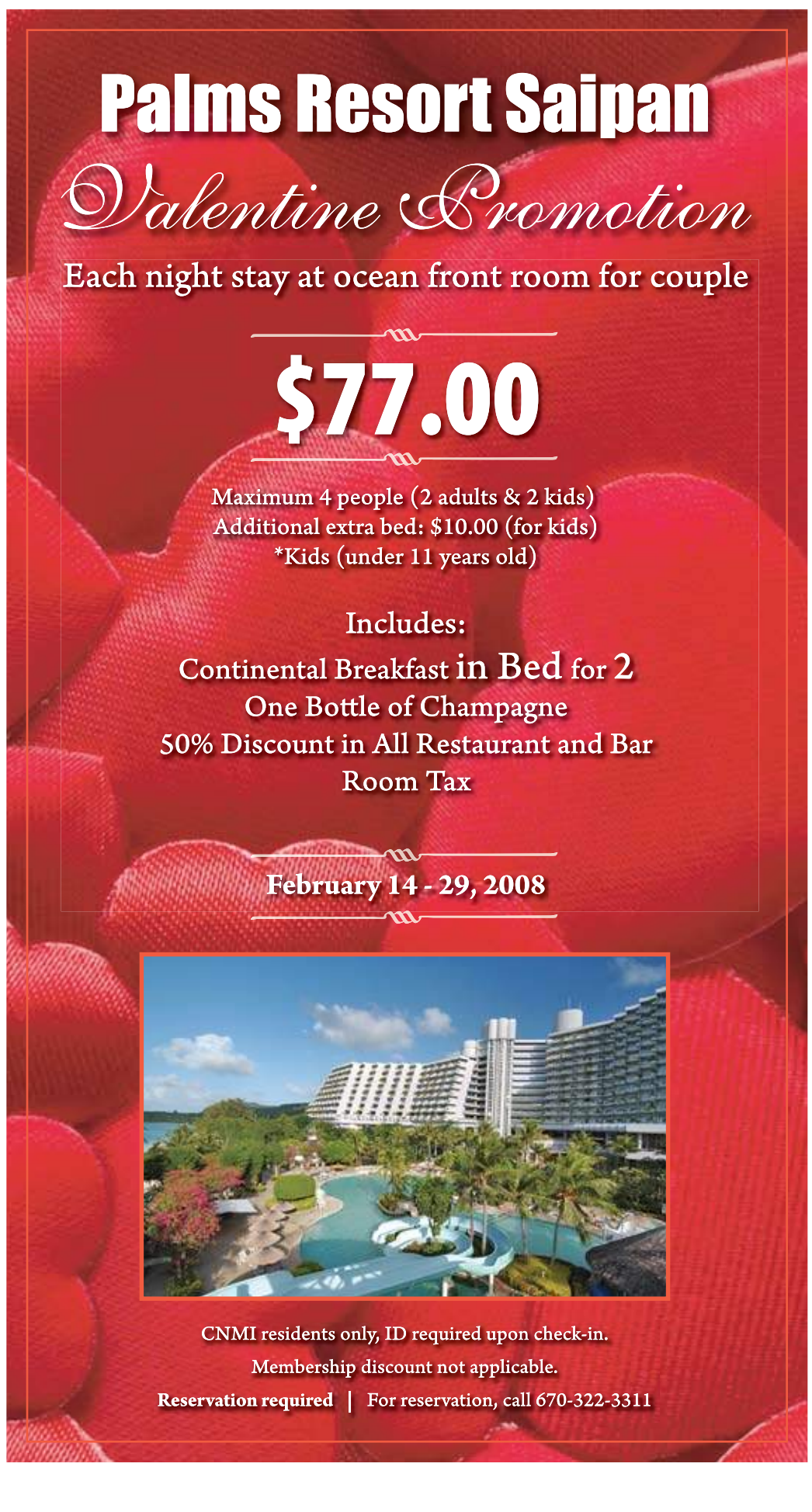
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Fitial to fly to mainland next week

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial will in the United States on official business in the next two weeks or more.

The first item in the governor's agenda is a meeting in Dallas with his special assistant for alternative energy. Fitial and James E. Quick will discuss a bid for a geothermal plant that the CNMI government hopes to build in one of the islands north of Saipan.

Fitial will be at Southern Methodist University, where Quick serves as associate vice president for research, on Feb. 18 to 19, 2008.

On Friday, Feb. 22, the governor will be in Washington, D.C. for a meeting of the Pacific Basin Development Council. The recently reorganized group is composed of four U.S. jurisdictions in the Pacific—American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, and the CNMI. The council aims to ensure that American Pacific islands get better access to the federal grants system by pooling their resources.

From Feb. 23 to 25, Fitial will attend the National Governor's Association convention. The Intergovernmental Group on Insular Affairs will meet the following day.

The governor said he has a business meeting with some investors on Feb. 27, Wednesday.

On Thursday, Feb. 28, Fitial will testify at a minimum wage hearing called by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The governor is expected to ask Congress to stop the next 50-cent hike to the local minimum wage, which is now at $3.55 an hour. The second increase mandated by the 2007 federal minimum wage law is scheduled for May 2008.

The governor said the House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs is also mulling a minimum wage hearing in Washington, D.C., in addition to the one the subcommittee is holding in American Samoa on Feb. 22.

If this happens, the governor will have to stay longer in Washington, D.C.

Penalties for late budget?

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

A lawmaker says key elected officials should be penalized if they fail to pass a budget on time.

Rep. Tina Sablan made the proposal amid the continued lack of a balanced budget for the current fiscal year. The government is now almost a half-year into FY2008.

"I also think we should implement meaningful penalties for failing to meet the deadlines stipulated in the Planning and Budget Act. At a minimum, legislators and the governor and lieutenant governor should not get paid until a balanced budget has been passed," Sablan said.

She noted that passing the budget is "the single most important responsibility of the House of Representatives."

But in this case, she said, part of the problem is that the administration missed deadlines set by the Planning and Budgeting Act. A proposed balanced budget should have been submitted in April 2007. Adjustments should have been submitted in July, and the Legislature should have taken final action on the budget within 30 days.

However, the proposed budget was not submitted until September 2007, just weeks before the end of the fiscal year.

Sablan added that the governor's budget is unbalanced because it makes problematic assumptions, including a Retirement Fund employer contribution of 11 percent, which is actually 18 percent, and the enactment of the unpaid holiday bill, which has yet to pass in the Legislature, among other things.

She also said that the proposed budget plan did not include some necessary information—for example, actual expenditures for the past two years, or even just the past year.

Secret Service exec holds seminar on ID theft, counterfeit detection

A U.S. Secret Service official is on island to conduct an identity theft and counterfeit money detention presentation at the Saipan Grand Hotel in Susupe today.

U.S. Secret Service's Gus Reichle is expected to discuss evolution and detection of counterfeit U.S. currency as well as identity theft and consumer awareness.

Reichle will explain the characteristics of genuine U.S. currency, give an overview of the counterfeiting processes, and discuss detection techniques and reporting of counterfeiting activity.

On the identity theft and consumer awareness, Reichle will give an overview of how criminals obtain personal identifiers and exploit information for illicit financial gain.

The presenter will also disclose how to reduce risk of falling prey to identity related crimes.

G4S Security Services and Saipan Grand Hotel are sponsoring the free presentation, which is intended for businesses to keep themselves abreast of all threats in order to properly protect themselves and prevent possible loss.

"Understanding threats and how they affect us is important to your business protection strategy," according to G4S.

The presentation will be between 10am to noon and from 2pm to 4pm. ***(Ferdie dela Torre)***

NMC

From Page 1

"And those are the focal points," Fernandez said.

She also pointed out that WASC had reiterated with past college administrators and former regents the need to address the issues in its program review.

In 2000, the issues grew larger, Fernandez said, until 2006, when it became apparent to the accrediting team that NMC was not forthcoming in its reports.

Fernandez started with NMC in May 2007.

NMC also presented to lawmakers what the institution needs in order to meet full compliance.

Fernandez said a rough estimate of $3 million is needed to fix what is possible, as the college "only has a short period of time" to show cause as to why it should keep its accreditation.

Sen. Paul Manglona and Sen. Felix Mendiola mentioned that both the House and the Senate should meet to come up with a law on how to address the issue.

Rep. Ray Palacios said he would look at NMC for guidance in terms of what the college may need for the long term and short term.

Rep. Stanley Torres, a critic of NMC and its president, was seen walking around the halls of the Legislature but he did not participate in any of the discussions at yesterday's meeting.

The college has been ordered to show cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

NMC has been on probation since February 2007.

VOLCANIC

From Page 1

According to the CNMI Emergency Management Office, the volcano on Anatahan has been spewing out gas and steam lately. This was based on data provided by the U.S. Geological Survey and National Weather Service in Guam.

EMO said that light to variable winds carried the volcanic haze south toward Saipan and Tinian. "We expect the haze to mingle around our area for several hours or more," it said.

As of 9:30am yesterday, EMO said its SO2 analyzer reading indicated 700ppb (parts per billions). As of 4:30pm, the reading showed it down to 121ppb.

"Concentrations of volcanic gases should be low…but the haze and odor may bother people with respiratory problems," EMO said.

The Department of Public Health said people with lung problems and other serious illnesses should comply with the following advisories:

- If you have lung problems, it is best to stay indoors while ash is falling.
- Asthmatic children should remain indoors while ash is falling.
- Seek medical care if you feel shortness of breath.

DPH said the Commonwealth Health Center is prepared to handle any increase in patients due to respiratory problems.

DPH also advised people not to drink water that is contaminated with heavy ash fall.

The last volcanic haze advisory was issued on Sept. 21, 2007, when the Anatahan haze blanketed Saipan and Tinian. Anatahan volcano has been putting out gas and steam plume since its eruption in May 2003.

Last month, Fitial extended again the emergency declaration on Anatahan, saying the island is still unsafe for human habitation. He ordered all travel to the island restricted with the exception of scientific expeditions.

The emergency declaration for Anatahan has been in place since May 13, 2003.

Anatahan is a small volcanic island 120 km north of Saipan. The first historic eruption was reported in May 2003. In April 2004, the volcano woke up again after a few months of slumber.

FEDERALIZATION

From Page 1

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, citing reports from the CNMI's lobbyists in Washington, D.C., said the omnibus bill that includes the CNMI immigration federalization is seeing some delay in the Senate.

This happened after Sen. Tom Coburn reportedly proposed an amendment allowing guns in public parks—a controversial issue especially in an election year.

Fitial said the government does not know yet what will happen to the bill.

In an interview with KSPN, congressional staffer Allen Stayman said Coburn's amendment made what was once considered a "non-controversial" bill now controversial. He said it may prompt some senators who previously supported the package bill to vote against it.

Efforts to renumber the bill and thereby go around Coburn's amendment have failed. The Senate may defer action on the legislation until March 2008, Stayman said.

In related news, local business leaders recently returned from Washington, D.C., where they met with congressional staffers and federal officials involved in the federalization plan.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Jim Arenovski and Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands chairwoman Lynn M. Knight went to the nation's capital to communicate the negative impact seen from a federally controlled immigration system and to gather information on how the bill would be implemented, if passed into law.

The CNMI immigration bill now awaits floor consideration by the Senate as part of Senate bill 2483, an omnibus bill made up of some 50 House-approved bills.

Title VII of the omnibus package, S. 2483, contains the exact text of H.R. 3079 as passed by the House on Dec. 12, 2007, and as approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee last month.

The bill would extend immigration law to the Northern Marianas and create a federally run guest-worker program in the Commonwealth. It would also give the CNMI a delegate in the House with limited voting powers. Currently, all U.S. possessions except the CNMI have a delegate in Congress.

Before adjourning in December, the Senate adopted a unanimous consent agreement governing debate on S. 2483. That agreement limits the number of amendments that may be offered on the Senate floor to S. 2483 to five amendments. The amendments that have been made address aspects apart from the CNMI title.

The Senate had planned on passing the omnibus bill this month.

INVESTOR

From Page 1

with the project we would do," said Wang in an interview with the *Saipan Tribune* late afternoon yesterday. "We scaled down because that's an investor decision but it's by no means set in stone that that will be final figure we will be investing for the project. It's just due to various business reasons that the investors have looked at."

Asked whether the $150-million cut in investment would also result in the downsizing of the planned 300-room hotel and casino facility, Wang said Bridge Investment will move forward in the construction of the 300 rooms and that it will remain of high quality.

"The 300 rooms would still be built. There were certain design elements that we've changed from our initial projections. Various factors—design element and general contracting factors and things like that—but we believe we will build a high quality project as we move forward," he said.

Wang, who was accompanied by Bridge Investment's vice president CNMI operations, Phillip Mendiola-Long, during the interview at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan executive lounge, also reported that he went to Tinian yesterday to meet with the island's officials and announce that his company will go ahead with its project.

Among the officials Wang and Mendiola-Long talked to on Tinian were Rep. Edwin Aldan, Sens. Joseph Mendiola, Henry San Nicolas, and Jude Hoffschneider, and the senior adviser of Tinian Mayor Jose San Nicolas. San Nicolas did not meet with the group as he was off-island.

"I gave them an update about our project and let them now that Bridge Investment is continuing its plan to move forward with our development and got favorable response from them and got their continued support," said Wang.

Bridge Investment officials also met with the Tinian Gaming Commission and updated them about the company's plans and the timeline of its project.

The investor, who owns Bethesda, Maryland-based The Fang Group, said the past two days he spent in the CNMI were very productive from a business standpoint.

"I feel very good about my two days here in that I got quite a bit accomplished and we're able to meet with several significant individuals and agencies that I needed to meet with in order to ensure my investors and my investment group and the owners that we'll be able to move forward successfully," he said.

Bridge Investment has hired the China-based Tianyuan Construction Group to build the 300-room hotel and casino. It will be built on 75,000 square feet of land that the company has leased for 55 years.

Aside from Wang, other investors in the Tinian project are Rudy Pamintuan, Howard Li, Ken Wong, Akshay Desai, and Rocky Li.

Man in 8 burglaries gets a month in prison

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona Villagomez Manglona has rejected the Attorney General's Office's recommendation to suspend all the prison terms of a man who admitted involvement in eight burglary cases.

Instead, Manglona agreed to accept an amended plea agreement entered by assistant attorney general Mike Nisperos Jr. and defendant Daniel Aldan Quitugua that included one month of actual prison time.

"Inasmuch as the court understands the significance of imposing suspended jail sentences to allow defendants to avoid immediate incarceration and instead begin work and earn money to pay for restitution, the court is concerned about the wrong message that others will receive when no jail time is mandated even after committing this serious offense of burglary," Manglona said.

At the same time, the judge said, she is aware of the benefits of encouraging those who have committed a crime to come forward, accept responsibility, and to compensate the victims immediately.

Manglona sentenced the 37-year-old Quitugua to five years imprisonment, all suspended except for one month, with credit for four days served, for conspiracy to commit burglary and theft.

For burglary, Quitugua was sentenced to five years in prison, all suspended except for one month, with credit for four days served.

Manglona said the sentences shall run concurrently. This means that the total jail term for both counts is one month in prison.

The judge ordered the defendant to start serving the sentence at the Department of Corrections on Monday at 8am. Quitugua will be released on March 15, 2008 at 8am.

Manglona recommended that the defendant be granted work release privileges to enable him to begin making restitution payments immediately.

Quitugua will be placed on probation for four years and 11 months and required to pay a $500 fine, $100 court assessment fee, and $100 in annual probation fee. Manglona ordered the defendant to pay $8,199.15 in restitution to the victims.

She directed the defendant to write a letter of apology to Mark LG Sasaki and the other victims in the uncharged police cases: Ai Lian Store, Kim's Market, Clara Market, the Public School System, and CES Electronic Sales & Service.

The judge said Quitugua must perform 150 hours of community service and cooperate in the prosecution of anyone who abetted or profited by his illegal acts from 2005 to 2007.

Quitugua had pleaded guilty to the night-time burglary that occurred at the residence of Sasaki on July 8, 2006.

After he was arrested, the defendant voluntarily cooperated with law enforcement officials and provided information that led to the resolution of seven other unsolved burglary cases, as well as the prosecution of others involved with the sale of the stolen items.

Manglona said Quitugua admitted to being involved in these seven other burglary cases with other individuals, and has accepted legal responsibility to pay restitution to the victims.

Although the defendant has no prior criminal convictions, Manglona said these series of burglaries in 2006 is alarming.

The prosecution first strongly recommended a light sentence for Quitugua and called for the suspension of all jail terms and a lengthy probation period.

The prosecution highlighted Quitugua's lack of a prior criminal history, his immediate acceptance of responsibility for not only the case he was arrested, but for other cases that law enforcement had not yet resolved independently.

The prosecution also cited Quitugua's strong likelihood of securing private sector employment and remitting restitution payments to the victims in these cases.

Manglona said at the change of plea hearing, two of the uncharged case victims were present to express their strong desire to ensure they are compensated for their damages rather than seek the imposition of a lengthy jail sentence.

Furthermore, Manglona said, Quitugua has assisted law enforcement in pursuing cases against others that encourage these types of offenses.

"Based on the foregoing facts, this court agreed to accept the amended plea agreement that included one month of actual incarceration," the judge said.

27th agri fair to be held this year

The 27th annual Saipan Agriculture Fair is a sure thing this year after its absence in 2007, according to Saipan Agriculture Fair chairman Isidoro T. Cabrera.

It is scheduled to take place on May 24.

The Saipan Agriculture Fair was not held last year due to funding delays. When the money became available, the group scheduled the fair for December. However, many of the farmers had agreed to move it to 2008 instead.

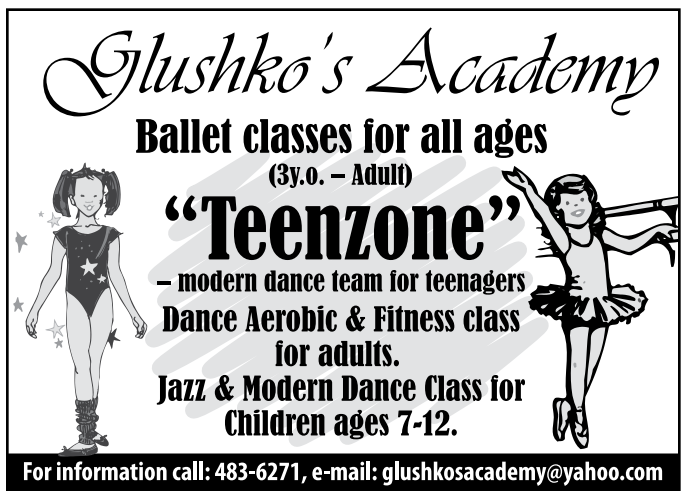
A budget of at least $20,000 is needed to hold this year's event.

"And we have that money now, its sitting in the bank," Cabrera assured.

The Saipan Agriculture Fair, which started in 1978, has been held traditionally every year in May.

The fair serves as an opportunity for farmers to show off their cattle and freshly grown fruits and vegetables. Cash prizes are often given away to those with best presentations

"Plans are underway for the preparations of the fair and we're sure to have it this coming May," Cabrera said. ***(Rianne Pangelinan)***



Castro, Williams receive military promotions

Two Northern Mariana Islands residents who are currently with the U.S. armed forces were recently promoted to higher posts.

Maj. Edwin A. Castro was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel on Feb. 1, 2008. His promotion ceremony was held at the Douglas MacArthur Corridor of the Pentagon and presided over by Brig. Gen. Randy E. Manner. In Manner's welcoming remarks, he described Castro as the first person from the Northern Mariana Islands to achieve the rank of colonel while in active duty.

Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio, Brig. Gen. Randy E. Manner, newly promoted Lt. Col. Edwin A. Castro, his wife Pili and their sons Edwin Jr. and Miguel and daughter Pauline

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Castro is the son of Daniel Pangelinan Castro and Ruth Albert Castro of San Antonio. He was born and raised on Saipan and enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly after graduating from Marianas High School in 1981. He later received a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Columbia College, MO and a master's degree in Human Resources from Webster University. He and his wife Pili have three children, Edwin Jr., Miguel and Pauline.

Castro was commissioned into the Signal Corps in 1991 through the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, GA. His first assignment was as Signal Officer for the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment at Hofenfels, Germany. In 2004, he deployed with the 72nd Signal Battalion in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. He is currently an action officer in the Army Asymetric Warfare Office, Electronic Warfare Division.

Another member of the U.S. Army currently stationed at the Pentagon who also received a promotion was Sgt. Connie C. Williams. She was promoted to Staff Sergeant on Feb. 4, 2008.

Williams is the daughter of Joseph Juan Cruz and Begonia Deleon Guerrero Cruz of Chalan Kiya, Saipan. She was born and raised in Saipan and graduated from Marianas High School. She is married to Sgt. Terrance Williams and they are the proud parents of a 3-year-old boy, Terrance Williams Jr. or "TJ". In addition to her military duties, Williams is currently pursuing a degree in Computer Information Systems Management from Park University. Her promotion ceremony was attended by colleagues, family, friends and several staff of the Resident Representative's Office. Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio himself was able to attend Castro's promotion ceremony.

"This is truly a great day for the Northern Marianas. It is quite an honor to witness our bright, young men and women ascend through the military chain of command and get recognized for all their determination, hard work, untiring commitment and patriotism. Lieutenant Colonel Castro and Staff Sergeant Williams exemplify the ideals necessary for defending the freedom, liberty and democracy of our great Nation especially during this period of unprecedented challenge for our country and extraordinary changes for the armed forces," Tenorio said.

"I extend congratulations and best wishes to you, Ed and Connie, on your accomplishments." ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Staff Sgt. Connie Cruz Williams, carrying her son Terrance Williams Jr. "TJ", Sgt. Grace Cing, Christina DLG Cruz, Information Technology Agency director Neal Shelley, friends and staff of the Resident Representative's Office after her promotion ceremony.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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INVITATION TO BID
NMHC IFB08-005

This ad is paid for with HUD funds.

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, hereby give notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids for the **LANDSCAPING OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS JAPAN CULTURAL CENTER** in Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Interested bidders must have three (3) years of experience in landscaping services and activities.

Interested individuals or firms may pick up a copy of the Project Package beginning Thursday, January 31, 2008, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI and austerity holidays. A non-refundable payment of one hundred dollars ($100.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

Bidders are advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act and the labor standard provisions for wage rate determination of the Commonwealth. All labor on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $3.55 per hour which took effect on July 25, 2007 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour that is scheduled to take effect on May 26, 2008 and extending further, until the hourly rate equals that of the Federal Minimum Wage of $7.50 per hour.

A **mandatory pre-bid conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m.** on **Friday, February 15, 2008**, at the Northern Marianas Japan Cultural Center in Garapan, Saipan next to the Garapan Central Park, and all interested bidders will be given the opportunity to walk through the proposed project site, familiarize themselves with the required work and ask questions regarding the project. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder.

Sealed Bids must be marked **NMHC ITB-08-005**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director, Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m., local time, February 20, 2008**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, February 20, 2008 and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com For bidders located outside of the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U. S. Postal Service or the official government postal service no later than February 20, 2008 AND must be received by Procurement and Supply no later than February 29, 2008. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, March 3, 2008. However, if no Notices of Intent to Bid are received from bidders outside of the CNMI, the bids will be opened at 10:30 a.m., local time, February 20, 2008.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00), a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be in the form of a Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Landscaping of the NM Japan Cultural Center Project". Surety companies must hold a Certificate of Authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable le to the Attorney General.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment Bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price. Pursuant to Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Twenty (120) calendar days. Liquidated damages will be assessed at Five Hundred Dollars (US$500.00) per calendar day for delays beyond the established completion date.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and the contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

NMHC hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

All documents received shall be the sole property of the NMHC with the exception of the Bid Bond, Certified Check, or Cashier's Check, which will be returned to the proposers after the acceptance and award of contract to the successful contractor.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any defects in the said proposals, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All proposals will become the property of the Government.

/s/ Manuel A. Sablan
Chairman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Division of Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB 08-023

The CNMI Public School System and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the **Construction of Building "J" to be located at Marianas High School, Saipan.**

Detailed information on the scope of work and specifications are available, for a fee, at Pacific Quick Print & Post located in Middle Road, Garapan, Saipan. **All interested bidders, prior to obtaining copies of the detailed information, shall register with the PSS Office of Procurement & Supply.**

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 08-023" containing (1) original and five (5) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than March 4, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 08-023, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (1-original and one copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Bidders are advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act and the labor standard provisions for wage rate determination of the Commonwealth. All labor on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $ 3.55 per hour which took effect on July 25, 2007 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour that is scheduled to take effect on May 26, 2008 and extending further, until the hourly rate equals that of the Federal Minimum Wage of $ 7.50 per hour.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with CNMI Public School System Procurement Regulations. Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and the Contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

The CNMI Public School System hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

Pursuant to the Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Sixty (160) Calendar days beginning with the date of Notice to Proceed. The Contractor shall pay to the CNMI Public School System the greater sum of **U.S. $100.00 per day (One Hundred Dollars), or 2% of the total contract price divided by the number of calendar days of the contract time**, not as a penalty, but as reasonable liquidated damages for failing, neglecting, or refusing to complete the work within the time herein specified, and said sums shall be paid for each consecutive calendar day that the Contractor shall be in default beyond the time stipulated for completing the work.

A pre-bid conference will be held at the PSS Conference Room, 3rd Floor NMI Retirement Fund Building, on February 22, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl Dela Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: **delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp**.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Public School System.

/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Manuel A. Sablan
NMHC Board Chairman

/S/ Carl Dela Cruz, M.B.A.
Acting P&S Officer

USDA seeks business loan, grant applicants

WASHINGTON—USDA Rural Development Under Secretary Thomas C. Dorr invited yesterday applications for four programs to support businesses and small minority producers in rural areas.

"These programs are vital to rural economies because they promote entrepreneurship and help local businesses get access to capital, technical assistance and new markets for their products and services," Dorr said. "Helping rural businesses succeed is a fundamental part of USDA Rural Development's mission."

The four programs under which applications are being accepted are:

■ Rural Economic Development Loans

■ Rural Business Opportunity Grants

■ Rural Cooperative Development Grants

■ Small Minority Producer Grants

The Rural Economic Development Loan program provides zero-interest loans to Rural Development utility program borrowers, which in turn re-lend the money at zero interest to local entities to promote economic development and job creation projects.

The Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program finances training and technical assistance for business development.

Small Minority Producer Grants are provided to cooperatives or associations of cooperatives with at least 75 percent minority representation among their membership and/or governing board.

The Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program helps rural residents form new cooperative businesses and improve the operations of existing cooperatives.

Application Deadline

Rural Economic Development Loans, March 31, 20081, June 30, 20082

Rural Business Opportunity Grants, March 31, 2008

Rural Cooperative Development Grants, April 8, 2008

Small Minority Producer Grants, April 8, 2008

Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov .

Kaipat's priority is community outreach

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Former representative and now Department of Labor deputy secretary Cinta Kaipat said she is now focusing on the community outreach program to educate the public on Public Law 15-108, the new labor reform law, and its regulations.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune*, Kaipat said she is very happy because the outreach program has already received positive response from employers and employees.

Kaipat, who is the principal author of the controversial P.L. 15-108, said they had met with various groups starting with a Filipino group invited by the Philippine consul general.

She said they also met with other groups such as the Friends of the Marianas Inc. and some teachers from San Vicente.

"We had that forum with Chamber of Commerce and HANMI at the multi-purpose. And this week we are going to have a meeting with Legislature," she said.

Kaipat said they also met with Aqua Resort and Pacific Islands Club managements.

"It's been very, very positive. The employers and employees have been very relieved that, after hearing from people who don't like the law, at least they are going to really figure out what was going with it," she said.

The deputy secretary said at least people are now telling them that they are so glad that they attended the forum so they can get the answers directly from the Labor staff who will be the ones to implement that law.

Kaipat said she is also honored that Labor Secretary Gil M. San Nicolas had confidence in her return to Labor.

She said she can assist in the implementation of P.L. 15-108 and to help out in various ways that the department can assist the public.

Before she became a lawmaker, Kaipat used to serve as Labor administrative hearing officer for five years.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial on Monday said Kaipat as Labor deputy secretary will be in charge of community outreach "to be sure everyone understands the much-improved structure of our citizen worker-preference and or guest worker program."

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy birthday greetings go out to Francisco D. Diaz, who is celebrating his first birthday today, Feb. 14, 2008. "May you enjoy your special day and we pray that you will have more birthdays to come." Greetings come from your mom Tricia, your grandparents Francisco and Bedu Diaz, and family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings to Tita Myrna E. Ortizo, who is celebrating her birthday today. Feb. 14, 2008. "Wishing you everything that makes you happy on your birthday. Have a blessed and beautiful day!" Love, Posadas sisters.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TaoTao Tano meets with bishop

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
Rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TaoTao Tano president Greg Cruz met with Bishop Tomas A. Camacho Monday afternoon to discuss the group's disagreement with the recent actions of social advocacy groups on the island that harbor abused women.

According to Cruz, "TaoTao Tano has reasons to believe that the Chalan Kanoa Diocese Catholic Social Services Karidat, Sr. Mary Stella, Guma Esperanza Lauri Ogomuro, Wendy Doromal and the National Advocacy Center for Sisters of the Good Shepard have gone far beyond their mission scope and mutual agreement with the Department of Interior and our local government in the combat of human trafficking in the CNMI."

Cruz claimed that these groups and persons have engaged in a conspiracy with U.S. Senate staff Allen Stayman, former Department of Interior deputy assistant secretary David Cohen, Insular Affairs' Jeff Schorr, and Federal Ombudsman Jim Benedetto to conspire with foreign organizations in the CNMI in coercing foreign guest workers into signature drives, candle light vigils, protest, flower and gift drive for Congresswoman Donna Christensen of the Virgin Islands, and Unity March.

Cruz

Bishop Camacho said he does not want Karidat and Guma Esperanza to be dragged into the matter. "Individuals, maybe" but not the advocate groups.

He added that for the people who work there, what they do on their own time is their own business.

Cruz said the TaoTao Tano group is requesting the Office of the Attorney General to provide a copy of Memorandum of Agreement between the Babauta Administration and the Department of Interior signed back in 2003.

He is asking the AG's office as well to include a copy of "reprogramming authority for all five agencies involved who are federally funded and is now missing on file according the Attorney General since the day the Fitial administration stepped into office."

Navy aircraft lost at sea during training

SANTA RITA, Guam—A Navy EA-6B Prowler assigned to Electronic Attack Squadron 136, part of Carrier Air Wing FIVE, was lost at sea during training Feb. 12 at approximately 4 p.m. 28 nautical miles off Andersen Air Force Base.

All of the four crewmembers ejected from the aircraft prior to the crash. They were transported by Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 to U.S. Naval Hospital Guam for further assessment.

The cause of this incident is currently being investigated.

The aircraft is part of the USS Kitty Hawk Strike Group, which is the U.S. Navy's largest Carrier Strike Group and is comprised of the carrier, Carrier Air Wing 5, seven ships of Destroyer Squadron 15, and two Aegis cruisers. With the ships permanently forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan, and the Air Wing to Atsugi, Japan, they serve as U.S. 7th Fleet's combatant force. ***(USN)***

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THIS WEEKEND.. DON'T MISS IT!

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

February 14, 2000

Land issues seal disapproval of free trade zones
Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has tossed back to the Legislature a legislation seeking to establish free trade zones in the Northern Marianas due to the administration-sponsored bill's failure to address issues surrounding the use of public lands. "Issues regarding public lands have recently been identified and must be addressed in order to ensure the integrity of Commonwealth free trade zones once established," Mr. Tenorio told legislators in a Feb. 10, 2000 letter.

Govt spent less on office rental expenses
The Department of Finance on Friday reported that the CNMI government managed to reduce by close to 16 percent its office rental expenses in Fiscal 1999 from the 1997 level. In 1997, government leases of private sector office space totaled $2.3 million which was down by $400,000, or 15.5 percent, to $1.9 million last year, a DOF report showed.

AGO reorganization looms
Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio is expecting to see a major house cleaning at the Attorney General's Office with the assumption to office of a new chief government counsel amid widespread criticisms on alleged inefficient management. Tenorio expressed confidence newly-appointed Attorney General Herbert D. Soll will be able to effectively carry out a reorganization at the AGO. Soll's appointment Thursday was sent immediately to the Senate for its advice and consent.

February 14, 2001

CUC officials in hot water
The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is facing a possible investigation by the Office of the Public Auditor following allegations of breach of fiduciary duties of its officials, ranging from excessive off-island trips to uncalled-for hiring of new personnel. Some members of the Legislature yesterday bared concrete plans to ask OPA to extensively investigate and evaluate the financial status of the government-owned utility corporation.

Measures to ensure safety of Managaha tourists eyed
Local leaders are poised at instituting more stringent security measures that would keep sinister elements from harming any more tourists who hop to the Managaha Island for fun and relaxation activities. This, after an unfortunate mauling incident involving a Japanese tourist occurred on the remote island over the weekend, which leaders perceive as an assault to the local tourism industry.

Need to breastfeed your newborn? Take an hour off and get paid for it.
Remember what commercials on milk always say at the end of the advertisement: Breastmilk is still best for babies? Northern Marianas legislators have apparently strictly kept that in mind. Members of the House of Representatives now want at least an hour each working day accorded to mothers employed by the government to come home and give their child what the TV and radio commercials say as "still the best milk."

February 14, 2002

CPA alerted against 13 terror suspects
The Federal Aviation Administration alerted the Commonwealth Ports Authority against 13 suspected terrorists who were the subject of the United States government's new terror warning issued Tuesday. The profiles of the suspected terrorists were forwarded to the CPA, which tightened its monitoring of Northern Marianas-bound passengers in line with the new terror alert.

Number of Section 8 applicants rising since September attacks
The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation recorded a significant increase in the number of families seeking shelter assistance since the September 11 terror attacks on the United States. NMHC Executive Director MaryLou S. Ada said the number of Section 8 applicants shot up as an aftermath of the terror attacks' economic impacts on the islands.

JOETEN'S BEST BUYS OF THE WEEK!

February 14-20, 2008

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DANDAN SUPERMARKET TEL.: 235-6016 MON. THRU SAT. 8:00A.M. - 9:00P.M.

HAFA-ADAI SHOPPING CENTER TEL.: 234-7596 MON. THRU SUN. 8:00A.M. - 11:00P.M.

BIG BARGAIN STORE TEL.: 235-5372 MON. THRU SUN. 8:00A.M. - 9:00P.M.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No.45

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MEMBER
The Associated Press
Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The coming change

The next president will ban torture and seek solutions for global warming and immigration; that's a good start

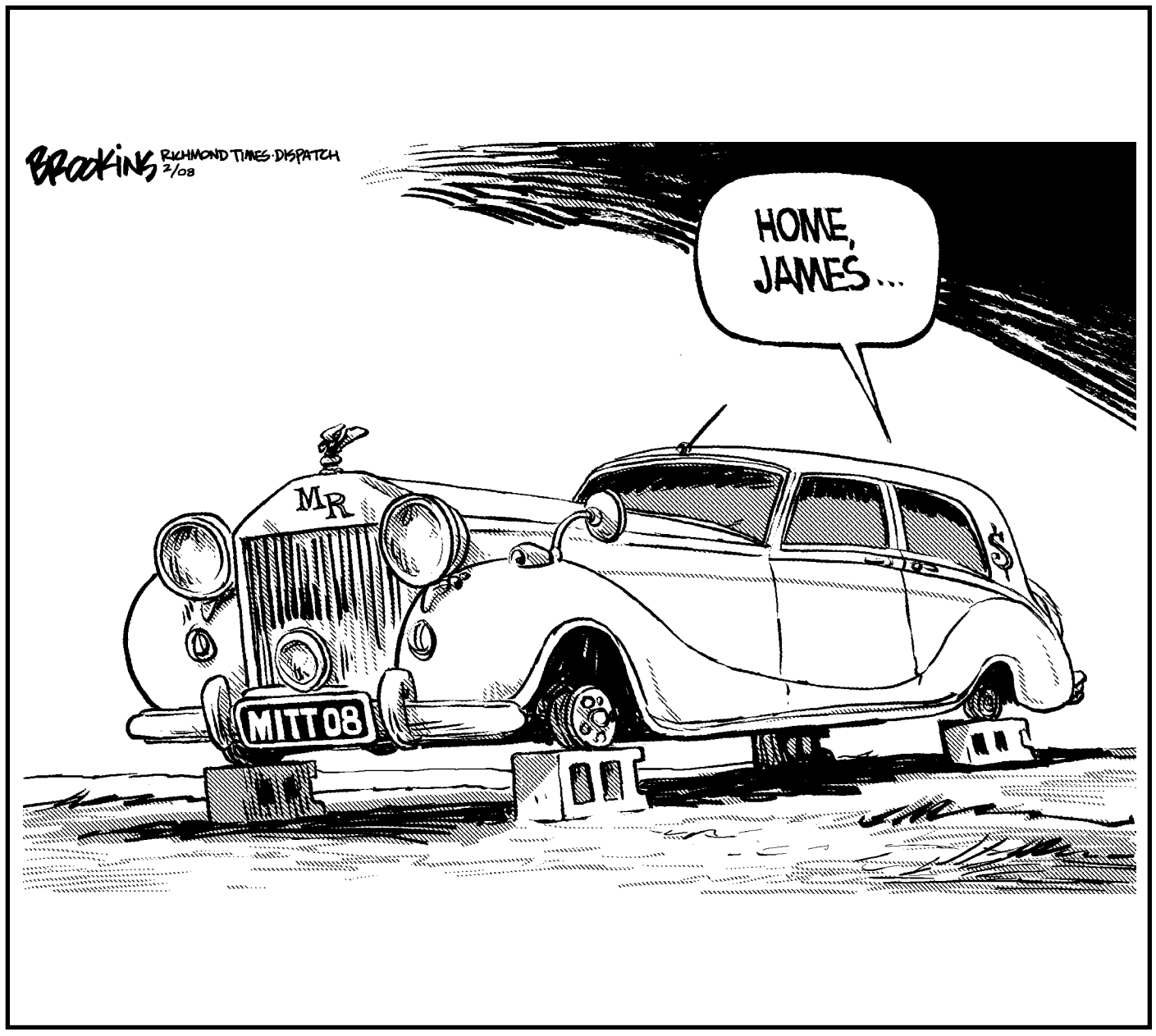
The Democratic presidential race remains a tossup, but the contours of the general election debate, and to some extent the next administration, have become remarkably clear in the past few days. Whether John McCain, Hillary Rodham Clinton or Barack Obama, the next president will be a senator, the first in 48 years to enter the White House from Congress. As much as executive experience may be a plus for the presidency, there is something to be said about coming to the White House with a nuanced understanding of what it takes to get things done in Washington. Perhaps it's not too much to hope that a president who's been stuck in gridlock will begin a new administration with a good understanding of how to fix it.

In contrast to the current White House occupant, the next president will prohibit the use of waterboarding and other forms of torture that have stained America's reputation abroad. In contrast to President Bush, the next president will not start as a skeptic about the danger posed by global warming, and he or she will favor, not resist, legislation to impose mandatory caps on greenhouse gases, even without an international agreement binding other nations. The next president will support federal funding for embryonic stem cell research and vigorous regulation of the campaign finance system. The next president, however chastened by the angry debate over illegal immigration, will believe in the need for comprehensive immigration reform and support the idea of giving those in this country illegally a path to earn legal status. This is one Bush administration position we are relieved will stay constant.

But the November matchup will also present sharp contrasts between the two party's nominees. As Mr. McCain told the Conservative Political Action Conference on Thursday, some elections are "fought within margins of small differences. This one will not be. We are arguing about hugely consequential things." The most obvious involves the war in Iraq; the two Democrats have pledged to "end" the war, by which they mean to withdraw combat forces as quickly as possible without being terribly clear about how they would handle the ensuing instability. Mr. McCain warns that the Democrats' approach "recklessly ignores the profound human calamity and dire threats to our security that would ensue" and speaks of the possible need to be in Iraq for years to come. More fundamentally, Mr. McCain says that he wants to be president to combat "the terrible evil of radical Islamic extremism," while the Democrats tend to downplay the threat of Islamic extremism.

In the domestic sphere, the two parties' nominees also have conflicting visions of the proper role and size of government. They differ over the wisdom of extending all the Bush tax cuts: Mr. McCain vows to do so, while the Democrats would roll back the tax cuts for the top earners. They disagree over the best approach to restraining health-care costs and making insurance affordable, with Mr. McCain placing far more emphasis on market forces and eschewing any mandates, either on individuals to purchase coverage or on insurers to offer coverage to all. They have opposing views about abortion and gay rights.

See THE COMING on Next Page



Tipping point

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

Malcolm Gladwell was a reporter covering the AIDS epidemic for *The Washington Post* when he realized that epidemiologists (people who study epidemics) have strikingly different assumptions when looking at the world because epidemics behave in a very unusual and counterintuitive way. Rather than the belief that a stimulus produces a similar or expected response, epidemiologists have a term called the "tipping point."

In Gladwell's book, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, he defines a tipping point as the moment of critical mass, the threshold, or the boiling point. It is the level at which the momentum for change becomes unstoppable. In other words, epidemiologists believe the smallest stimulus can produce a huge response where things seem to happen all at once. This is the moment on a graph when the line starts to shoot straight up. In 1982, AIDS tipped when it went from an isolated disease affecting a few gay men to become a worldwide public health threat.

Ideas can also be as contagious as a disease. For example, Micronesia experienced an unusual rash of teen suicides in the 1970s and 80s that was 10 times higher than anywhere else in the world. The suicide "malady" was transmitted from one person to another as easily as the flu virus. Gladwell believes that the tipping point can also be used in society and business to explain how a message, product, behavior, or person can become a hot trend and spread like an infectious disease. It explains how a movie made on a shoestring budget makes hundreds of millions (*The Blair Witch Project*), a self-published book becomes a best-seller (*The Christmas Box*), or how an obscure product becomes the latest fad (remember the "pet" rock).

Tipping points can be positive as well as negative. Let's focus on how we might harness the tipping point concept for positive results. How can you start a positive epidemic of your own? This means that a small input on your part will produce a much larger result by spreading very quickly. Gladwell believes that several preconditions have to exist before word-of-mouth buzz turns into a trend-setting roar. Similar to a virus, an idea has to be timely, potent, and infectious to the right people before the idea virus becomes a full-scale epidemic.

One example is the growth of the Airwalk shoe company, based out of San Diego, California. The company had steady growth until it hit a tipping point. The business started in the mid-1980s to create shoes for hard-core skateboarders. They became very popular through word-of-mouth and by sponsoring skateboarding events. In the early 1990s sales reached about $13 million dollars. The company decided to expand their focus to include snowboarding, surfing, mountain biking, and bicycle racing. They hired a small ad agency called Lambesis to help them change direction and create ads that were potent and infectious for their target market.

Airwalk already had a cult following among skateboarders, and Lambesis targeted a similar demographic group to make its message appeal to those with an active, alternative lifestyle. They were able to get alternative rock band members to wear their shoes on stage so that the hot shoes would be considered "cool" to teenagers. Their ads were funny and visually rich, and they all featured a truculent, slightly geeky anti-hero.

The ad campaign worked because its message was consistent and involved the principles of epidemic transmission. Sales in 1993 were $16 million when it reached its tipping point. Next year, sales hit $44 million, and in 1995 it jumped to $150 million. The year after that it was $175 million, and at its peak, Airwalk was ranked number three behind Nike and Adidas.

Your success in any endeavor depends more on the consistency of your actions than on the brilliance of your plans. Businesses and people who seem to become overnight sensations actually spent many months or years consistently taking steps that led them to their current success. Luck is when preparation meets opportunity.

No business or person becomes great overnight, but they can become great over time if they devote themselves to consistent, persistent actions that steadily accelerate their growth. Identify those critical issues that will move your business upward, and then consistently manage those issues on a regular basis. If your concept or product has appeal, is timely and potent, then it may eventually reach its tipping point where a small effort produces exponential results.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Catch of the day: Napoleon wrasse

By MIKE TRIPP
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Mike Tripp is the president of Marianas Dive and the producer and videographer of The Underwater World of Saipan *DVD.*

A couple of weeks ago, local award-winning, free diving spear fisherman Felix Sasamoto was able to catch and haul out of the water a 100-plus pound Terminal Phase Napoleon wrasse and a slightly smaller one a few days later.

Before I get started let's be perfectly clear: Those are a couple of big ass fish and no matter how you feel on the issue of whether or not they should have been taken, you must admit that doing so was quite a feat. To dive 50-plus feet on a single breath of air, hunt it down, shoot it and bring it to the surface after the struggle is impressive and is not something the average human can do these days. My hat goes off to Felix and his ability to catch fish, especially big fish, in this way.

Also as Mike Trianni, the Fisheries Manager at DFW has said, Felix has not broken any laws. He was not using SCUBA to fish, which is illegal in the CNMI, and he was not fishing in a marine protected area (MPA). Nor was he using any of the nets currently banned.

So what's the controversy?

It's economics, sustainability, a way of life and the "Teddy Bear" effect.

According to the IUCN Red list assessment in 2004, the Napoleon wrasse is an endangered species. It appears in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). This list includes species that are not necessarily now threatened with extinction but that may become so unless trade is closely controlled.

A few other facts….

The Napoleon wrasse is a magnificent fish. The largest of the wrasses, it can grow to a length of over seven feet, weigh in excess of four hundred pounds and live for more than 30 years.

In Asia, Napoleon wrasses are sought after for their meat. A Napoleon wrasse the size of a dinner plate can fetch more than US$1,000. The large fleshy lips are considered a delicacy and are highly sought after with an average asking price of over $300.

Terminal phase males breed with a harem or a small group of females. The supermale is territorial which means it remains in the same location over time and protects the area and the females there too. When the supermale dies a female becomes a male and replaces it. This ensures there is always the ability to reproduce and a continuous opportunity for divers to interact with large inquisitive fish only inches away from their mask.

The reproductive cycle is poorly understood. Overall its resilience is considered low with a minimum population doubling time of 4.5 - 14 years.

They cannot yet be bred in captivity. Not a single Napoleon wrasse has ever spawned in captivity and the outlook for aquaculture is not encouraging.

Its primary foods are mollusks, fishes, sea urchins, crustaceans, and other invertebrates. The Napoleon wrasse is one of the few predators of toxic animals such as sea hares, boxfishes and crown-of-thorns starfish.

Although the Napoleon wrasse is one of the largest reef fish, it is usually easily scared off. In a few places around the world however, individuals, often older specimens, have become quite well known and are visited regularly by divers. Usually after a period of feeding, bonds are formed with individual divers whom the wrasse recognize and seek out. These 'friendly' fish often appear as soon as divers enter the water and choose to spend the entire dive with them, even allowing divers to touch them.

Here are a couple of quotes from the captain of the *Odyssey,* a live-aboard dive vessel located in the Maldives. I can absolutely relate to this as I have had similar experiences in places like Palau and Yap.

"Then I noticed, amongst the backdrop of wonderfully colored fan corals, the charismatic Napoleon Wrasse, who had an air of grandeur and splendor about him making the dive complete before it even started."

"Looking into his eyes and interacting with this wild and gentle fish was one of the most moving experiences I have ever had. This was an animal very much aware of our presence. When no one was petting him, he would maneuver around the group, giving the closest person a gentle nudge or a brush, perhaps to remind us that he still required our attention."

So what does this all mean to the CNMI?

In the eyes of the law Felix did nothing wrong. With the Saipan economy on the ropes, the argument that catching a fish like this is not only necessary for survival for some but also a right of the people prevails. Unfortunately, this type of attitude is shortsighted and ultimately bad for the economy and the population as a whole for many reasons. In the end, it is potentially devastating to future generations of people in that they may never get a chance to see or eat one of these charismatic, tasty fish.

In defending the catch it is also fairly easy to look to the past when fishing pressures here were far greater than they are today and to take solace in the fact that "it used to be worse".

About four or five years ago the CNMI banned spear fishing with the aid of SCUBA gear. As Mr. Trianni has pointed out, we are the only area in this part of the world that has done this and in so doing we have effectively created a depth-dependent marine protected area. Other than a few exceptional individuals like Felix, it is pretty hard to catch these guys in their normal habitat.

In an email to me, Felix recounted how the commercial SCUBA fishing industry here once had four companies each harvesting as many as 2-5 Napoleon wrasse a day! This fact and the extended time required for this species to recover goes a long way in explaining why, after five years of diving here, I can only recount a handful of sightings of Terminal phase males, none of which were too interested in getting to know me or allowing me to capture more than a fleeting moment on camera.

Felix also suggested that this practice of using SCUBA, although reduced, still continues today. In defense of Felix he is quite correct in saying that the agencies tasked to do so should be more concerned with those individuals harvesting illegally than with him. That comes down to enforcement and as anyone who has lived here knows, that is a whole other story on which I will not digress!

Economics

Until such time when the Napoleon wrasse is common in our waters the overall economic benefit to the island is far greater with them alive, swimming on our reefs, than dead in a market. This would be especially true if the territorial Terminal males were protected at popular dive spots. The idea being that with time the resident male would become one of those "friendly" fish for photographers and videographers to capture endlessly over and over again.

In this scenario the economic benefits to everyone are drastic and must be broken down into two categories. First the more obvious benefits of direct revenues from diving activities including tourists renting gear and traveling to dive with Saipan's gentle giants. The second, perhaps less obvious form of revenue the island would benefit from, revolves around branding and advertising. This can best be summed up with what I'll call the "Teddy Bear Effect." You just want to reach out and hug these types of animals. It's what the RARE Pride campaign is about.

Encounters with marine life demonstrating "personality" and "charisma" are memorable and sought after by divers. These encounters turn into memories that linger with you for a lifetime, entering your conscious mind during times of reflection and ultimately they bring you back to that pin in the map.

To a tourism industry they are that 30-second Super Bowl ad that's worth a million or so dollars a second to air. But, unlike those make believe commercials, these are real experiences that stick with you forever. They barely lose the emotional intensity invoked at the time. In other words they put a destination on the map and they keep it there. Done right, a single image, in this case a Napoleon wrasse with a diver, shouts to the rest of the diving world—Palau, Maldives, Saipan……

I still get goose bumps when I tell people about some of my most memorable dives and I never have trouble recounting where I was at the time. Memories of dives petting a grouper, looking into the eyes of a curious fish twice your size or being surrounded by a pod of dolphins are among those that never fade. And when someone asks you..."Where was that?" There's no hesitation. Imagine if we could say Saipan and the response was…"Hey isn't that where they have the Eagle Rays, the Grotto and that huge Napoleon named Harry?"

> "Looking into his eyes and interacting with this wild and gentle fish was one of the most moving experiences I have ever had. This was an animal very much aware of our presence. When no one was petting him, he would maneuver around the group, giving the closest person a gentle nudge or a brush, perhaps to remind us that he still required our attention."

Unlike Super Bowl ads, to a tourism industry this type of advertising is provided free of charge by Mother Nature. It is ours to utilize and maintain or ours to destroy. If it is destroyed only memories remain in the minds of the living and in the images produced by those privileged enough to capture them on film.

If we choose preservation then in a situation where the Napoleon wrasse is prevalent and protected (with limited harvesting dependent on sound numbers) even the fisherman benefit. Hopefully in some direct way from the overall improvement of the economy but, also because the species is actually around in numbers that will allow some sort of harvest and profits from the catch without risking sustainability.

At the moment this situation does not exist here and although Mr. Trianni points out that the species is not rare but uncommon here the numbers are still low and I am not aware of any dive sites where Terminal males approach divers fearlessly.

Therefore, I think it would make a lot of sense to do what is necessary now to ensure that this fish has the best chance possible to become common in our waters. Yes, we can point to successes in the past like the banning of scuba spear fishing (by all accounts the numbers are improving) but doing more now could pay even bigger dividends down the road especially if the Napoleon becomes extinct in other areas. This would of course make our destination that much more attractive to the customers of a profitable sustainable dive industry.

So while I don't believe Felix should be persecuted for his catch, I am also saddened by it and believe that with the bigger picture in mind he should not have taken these fish, especially because they inhabited a very popular dive spot. Given time, their territorial nature and long life spans as well as the ability for them to lose fear of humans could have made them permanent fixtures at Obyan and ultimately in photos distributed around the world with the strongest form of advertising around—word of mouth.

I respect his abilities greatly and would hope that the agencies with the power to do so will take his advice and pursue those fishing illegally and, if deemed necessary, develop legislative action to protect these animals further in some way. This could be as simple as designating certain sites like Obyan, Lau Lau and Ice Cream as no take zones and enforcing the rules. The spill over effect will benefit everyone for generations to come.

On an aside note I also find it interesting that the Napoleon wrasse is a known predator of the crown of thorns starfish. Of course other

See CATCH on Page 14

THE COMING

From Page 10

And in the difference with the most long-lasting consequences, they would appoint markedly different types of justices to the Supreme Court, where the next president could have several vacancies to fill. Mr. McCain vows to pick justices "of the character and quality" of Mr. Bush's two picks, Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Samuel A. Alito Jr.; both Democratic senators voted against those nominees.

The casting hasn't been completed, but the stage is set for a compelling general election.

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Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲80° ▼74°	▲81° ▼73°	▲80° ▼73°	▲80° ▼73°	▲81° ▼74°

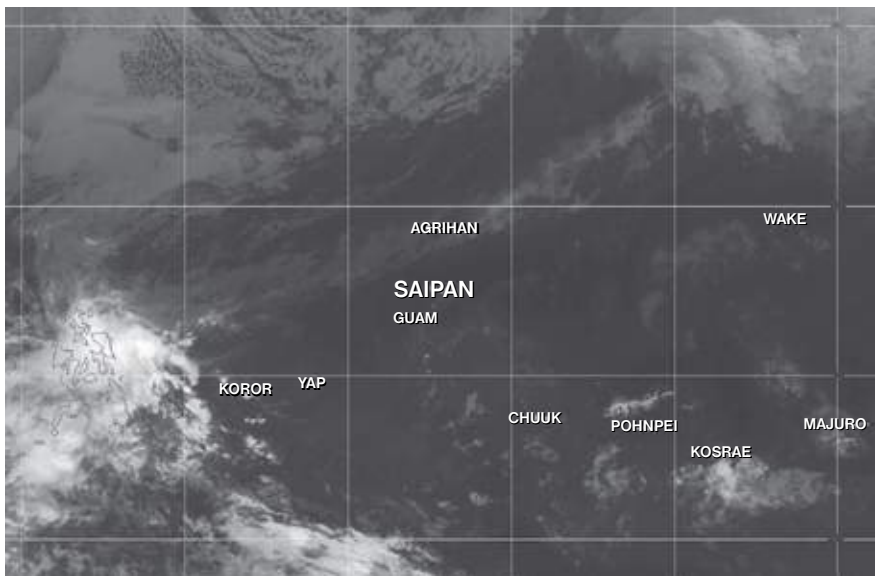
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲82	▼75
Palau	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼78
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼76
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼81
Pohnpei	Partly Sunny	▲85	▼74
Kosrae	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Cloudy	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲72	▼61
Beijing	Sunny	▲38	▼19
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲60	▼52
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲78	▼68
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲48	▼36
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲66	▼48
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲82	▼73
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲75	▼59
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲78	▼68
New York	Partly Sunny	▲41	▼32
Osaka	Cloudy	▲42	▼29
Paris	Sunny	▲50	▼33
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲44	▼20
Rome	Sunny	▲53	▼35
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲49	▼32
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲61	▼44
Seoul	Sunny	▲34	▼15
Tokyo	Sunny	▲46	▼38
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲46	▼29

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 13, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front enters the discussion area near 25N160E and extends to 16N142E then continues as a shear line to 12N130E. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 150 miles north of the front and shear line. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers between the equator and 5N from 158E to 165E and within 100 miles north and south of a line that stretches from 5N165E to 2N170E to 6N180. Another area of showers being produced by trade-wind convergence is located 100 miles either east and west of a line that extends from 5N170E to 14N164E. A weak trade-wind disturbance is producing clouds and a few showers near the Marianas between 11N and 15N from 144E to 150E. The near-equatorial trough has moved west of 130E. Low-level wind flow convergence east of the trough is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between 2N and 10N from 130E to 136E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
01:32AM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
06:24AM Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
12:07PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
07:57PM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:42AM	6:20PM
Friday	6:42AM	6:21PM
Saturday	6:42AM	6:21PM
Sunday	6:41AM	6:21PM
Monday	6:41AM	6:22PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:36AM	12:00AM*
Friday	12:31PM	01:04AM
Saturday	01:31PM	02:08AM
Sunday	02:34PM	03:10AM
Monday	03:38PM	04:09AM

*following day**

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Saipan-Shanghai			
MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6
Saipan-Beijing			
CA 988	3:15am	7:00am	1,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Shanghai-Saipan			
MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5
Beijing-Saipan			
CA 987	6:05pm	1:55am+1	4,7
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Letters to the Editor

Clarification on wrasse catch comments

I would like to comment on recent letters that have misquoted my statements regarding fishing regulations in the CNMI. Below are statements that I have previously sent out via email. My comments regarding scuba spear fishing and net use restrictions were commented on together. That is, my comments were the ban on scuba spear fishing and net use restrictions being unique to the CNMI, and not a ban on scuba spear fishing alone.

Although no estimates of the natural mortality rate of the Napolean wrasse exist at present, it is widely believed that the natural mortality rate of adult fish is probably low. Published studies indicate that longevity of the species is estimated at around 35-40 years, and sexual maturity begins at about 5 years. The Napoleon wrasse can exceed 200cm in length (6.5 feet).

In addition to the live reef fisheries in other jurisdictions, the use of scuba-spear has probably been the single most important cause of the decline of the Napolean wrasse worldwide. The CNMI, as mentioned below, banned the use of scuba-spear in 2002, and also placed restrictions on the use of monofilament gill, surround, drag nets. These actions have provided protection to juvenile wrasse that utilize lagoon and reef flats (nets), and to adults since free divers are not able to routinely access the depths that many adults are found at, that is below 70 feet.

With scuba-spear, divers would fish at night when the wrasse are resting in their caves or under or in between reef large reef structures, making it very easy to kill them. The divers can then bring the fish back to the boat, offload it, and go back down to continue fishing.

Catching a wrasse while free diving is much more difficult since it requires a person to hold their breath and descend to deeper waters to spear them. It is a physically challenging method, and very few people possess the attributes to be successful. Therefore, the number of wrasse that can be killed by scuba-spear is much higher than what can be harvested by a free-diver.

Below are my comments sent out to the email group last week. "1) As a free-diver Felix did not break any law(s) and has every right under existing law(s) to harvest that or any other fish he is able to. 2) The Napolean Wrasse is not a "rare" species in the CNMI. It has in fact been observed throughout the CNMI, and is considered 'uncommon'. In most cases, as Felix stated, the large ones tend to stay deeper, at the edge of free-diving range. At DFW, we have observed many sub-adults in the Lagoon. 3) The CNMI is the only jurisdiction in the Pacific that has laws outlawing scuba-spear 24/7, as well as restricting the use of monofilament gill, surround, drag nets. The fact that Felix was able to catch this fish in 43 feet of water is rather encouraging. Perhaps the management measures that are in place are paying some dividends. The intent behind the banning of scuba-spear was to provide fish with a refuge by depth, recognizing that there are not a lot of free-divers with the capabilities of someone like Felix. This action, in time, would slowly replenish the diveable fishing depths. We essentially created a marine protected depth zone throughout the CNMI, for those fish that are not primarily harvested by hook and line, such as the wrasse.

It seems as though there are two opinions that are in opposition to Felix's Obyan catch of the month. The first opinion is that he harvested it at or near a popular dive site, and that by doing so has deprived the dive industry of a quasi-reliable tourist attraction (someone asked the question 'how many tourists have seen it?'), which translates into revenue. The second opinion is the feeling by some that such fish should never be harvested for any reason. That they

See CLARIFICATION on Next Page

Chamorro fishing rights

No one should tell Chamorros where they can and cannot fish or hunt. Our fathers have fished and hunted here, their fathers have fished and hunted here, and our children will continue to fish and hunt here. From Guam to Maug, Chamorros can fish wherever we please. This is our land. Everyone else here are guests, whether invited or not. It is rude for guests to disrespect their hosts. Felix and other Chamorro brothers and sisters can fish wherever we please. *Hita I famagu'on y taotaomona, I man mofona na taotao. Hita I taotao tano yan I taotao tasi. Mungnga mu en talu guine gi tano taotaomona!*

Jeff Flores
Koblerville, Saipan

FIESTA
Resort & SPA
SAIPAN
A TanHoldings Company
Intimate Valentines Dinner
Treat your Special someone to an exceptional dinner with our
French inspired menu created by our
Executive Chef having this special occasion in mind…
5 course set menu with a choice of glass of wine
$ 65.00 per person
And to show your appreciation to your love one, we will include 1 gift certificate
from The SPA for every couple
and homemade truffle chocolate free…
with Live Romantic Music
The Claret Fine Dining Restaurant
Limited Seating
Menu
Caesar Salad Hotel Style
Marriage of
Vichyssoise Glacée & Cold consommé
Harmony of
Stuffed ocean fish with apple Jacqueline Style
Tenderloin Steak with Three Kinds Sauce
Charlemagne Style
Burning love Cake for Valentine
Valentine Package
Overnight stay at Ocean View Room
Claret Dinner for 2 ♥ 1 SPA Gift Certificate
$199.00
Reservation required
Live the Fiesta way!

FIESTA
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A TanHoldings Company
Valentine Dinner Buffet
Celebrate and Treat your Love Ones
with a Festive Buffet …
Fiesta Style!
Extensive Fresh Seafood featuring
Oysters, Prawns, Crabs etc.
Assorted Sashimi,
Hot Main Dishes and
Roast Beef carving, Tempura, Peking Duck and more…
Dessert table and ice creams
Live Jazz Music from Gentle Wind Band
Free Gift to all Ladies
We will also raffle SPA, Over night stay
and Sunday Brunch Gift Certificates
And for a perfect family date, we will have a
Free Magic Show and Games
with Happy the Clown!
Kids have Fun while Parents Dine!
$25.00 adult price
$10.00 kids price 5 y.o. to 11 y.o.
Dinner Starts at 6pm to 9:30pm
Magic Show at Azucena 2 starts at 7pm to 9pm
For reservation and Inquiries, please call 233 6414 or 234 7171
Look for Socorro or Verlyn
Live The Fiesta Way!

Letters to the Editor

US federalization: A direct impediment to the human right to self-determination

I love our national anthem of the CNMI. Until last year, I learned this song from some of my Chamoru and Carolinian sisters and brothers from the CNMI who live here in the continental United States. I am arduously trying to learn this song in Carolinian and look forward to the day when I can sing this song without the help of pen and paper. Permit me to rekindle a sense of pride in our homeland of the Marianas, the islands of my origins, by sharing with you the words that mean so much to us who have called these islands homeland for more than 5,000 years.

Gi talo gi halom tåsi Na gaige tano-ho, Ayo nai siempre hu saga Malago'ho

Ya un dia bai hu hanåo, Bai fåtto ha'ta'lo, Ti sina håo hu dingo, O tano-ho

Mit beses yan mås, Hu saluda håo, Gatbo na islas Mariånas, Hu tuna håo

Mit beses yan mås, Hu saluda håo, Gatbo na islas Mariånas, Hu tuna håo

Mit beses yan mås, Hu saluda håo, Gatbo na islas Mariånas, Hu tuna håo

My father was born on Saipan. My great grandmothers and grandfathers were at one time well known by Europeans because my family helped bring supplies to many parts of Micronesia and Oceania. My mother was born on Guam. After World War II, we were considered outcasts because my grandfather was a pure Japanese who happened to marry a Chamoru woman before the war ever started. Like many Chamoru families after the war, many moved to Guahan to seek better opportunities. My family was one of them. With this in mind, I am writing on behalf of the many people before me who have tried to seek a better life and who continue to struggle to live freely as peace-loving indigenous people of these islands.

I write briefly about my personal background to give context and authority to my work. For a very long time on our islands, we have remained divided as a Chamoru and Carolinian people over issues of the past. Whether these issues were grudges of war time or political relationship with the United States, we cannot let these memories surpass the good work that is beginning to happen in our homelands and in places where we have migrated. This great divide, like the abyss of the Marianas Trench, has been used by our colonizers to divide us as a people. Likewise, this colonial mentality has brought a racist tendency to all who call the Marianas home. Let us remember that racism is taught and if we do nothing to bring out the truth then we will remain in isolation, never allowing the truth to come forward. As a young Chamoru activist and theologian, it is now time to begin the process of healing so that we can work together as ONE people.

With the recent passage of H.R. 3079 in the House of Representatives, a group of young Chamoru and Carolinian activists (from Guahan and the CNMI) in the continental United States drafted letters to Senate committee members and were e-mailed to everyone who oppose H.R. 3079. For some reason, an editor from the local newspaper has attempted to cast a negative light on these efforts calling it "the administration's attempt to recruit young NMI students." It is with this kind of viciousness in biased media coverage that we seek to clarify positions that all must be aware of whether you are here in the continental United States or there on Guahan and the NMI. We cannot let these kinds of interpretations and judgments steer us in the wrong direction. I would like to personally challenge those who are in favor of federalization, including Tina Sablan, to study the contents of the bill verbatim to see if the CNMI and her people truly benefit from federalization. If one were to juxtapose the current labor and immigration laws of the CNMI with that of federalization, CNMI labor and immigration laws are stronger in protecting the human rights of its citizens and those who are contracted to come to our islands. The abuses of the past were a direct result of large U.S. owned corporations that used the CNMI for its profit. Today, at a time when the CNMI desperately needs an alternative economy, these corporations could care less because they came, they saw, and they plundered, forever casting a negative light on the CNMI.

We are *Famoksaiyan*, which translates to either "the place or time of nurturing" or "the time to paddle forward and move ahead." It finds its origins in the word *Poksai*, which means "to raise up." We are a grassroots network of activists, scholars, students, community and religious leaders/practitioners and artists who seek to push a progressive political, economic and social agenda for Chamorus and their communities at the local, national and international levels. Much of the work of *Famoksaiyan* has been to educate and inform the public communities at the local, national and international circles from around the world about the plight of our Oceanic communities in the Pacific. As our world shifts into "protecting the security of homeland," I ask you simply, "which homeland—the continent or the Marianas?" If federalization were to pass, we will succumb into being slaves of federal grants and monies system, which is already being siphoned from the poor into the military budget. The tragedy here is that not only will our lands be taken away, but also our sons and daughters who are "taught" to join the military. Let me be clear that I have utmost respect for all of the military service men and women, especially Chamorus and Carolinians, who step forward to serve this country to protect our freedoms. However, what we need to pay close attention to are the policies that dictate this mentality and the unfounded reasons for federalization and the military buildup in the Marianas.

As a member of *Famoksaiyan* and a Chamoru from both Guahan and Saipan, I have faxed letters, made phone calls, e-mailed, and visited the senators in their district offices and have always said "No to federalization." I have not been recruited or paid for these services as I have always served the people from these islands from the deepest core of my being for it was the people from the Marianas who donated their money for my seminary education. I have never forgotten my place in serving my people.

Some may say that it is not good to mix religion and politics. Believe me, I have had my fair share of the lecturing game. However, as someone who has a degree in theology, let us not forget that it was through politics that we have a Catholic religion in our islands. From the Old Testament to the Gospels of Jesus Christ, we have always been taught the struggle for freedom and liberation. Thus, we must work harder for the sake of protecting the very spirituality that we have come to own. This issue of federalization is not an "us versus them" mentality. It is about all of us working together as *one* Marianas to say no to federalization and no to the military buildup. These two issues work hand in hand. It is now time to bring an end to these wishes of the federal government who have consistently failed to live up to their promises with regards to the human right to a self-determined government. It is now time to act. Will you join me in a faxing party? Let us not rest until our voices are heard in the Senate.

If you would like to obtain copies of these letters, you may simply access this information online at http://www.geocities.com/minagahet/kontra_finafederal.htm or you may contact me at jonadiaz@gmail.com for more information. Please continue to fax these letters to the Senate and spread the word to all you meet. May Guahan and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas continue to work together for the good of all of her people.

Jonathan Blas Diaz
Redwood City, Calif.

Youth Congress blog spot

As the Legislative Secretary of the 10th CNMI Youth Congress, I feel it is very important to inform the public of our blog site: www.cnmiyouthcongress.blogspot.com.

We started the blog site to keep people informed of the activities and achievements of the Youth Congress. We have so many things planned for the rest of our term such as our annual summit, sessions, school/precinct forums, and a lot more community service activities. Thank you all for your support! *Un Dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase* and *Ghilisow*.

Matthew Kabua Blanco
Legislative Secretary
10th CNMI Youth Congress

CATCH

From Page 11

predators such as the triton trumpet also exist and they have their own controversies here in the CNMI. I've heard on occasion from individuals in some of the agencies that many feel the COTS are a problem here. I don't believe this to be the case but, hypothetically speaking, if it is then wouldn't it also make sense to further protect the Napoleon allowing Mother Nature to take care of the COTS?

One last quote which we may find useful from the Odyssey captain.

"Protection of reef fish species will further develop eco-tourism. This is already happening in the Maldives where the country's main income is derived from the tourist dollar. Tourists will pay a lot to dive on protected reefs where they can have memorable interactions with charismatic but increasingly rare, large grouper and wrasse".

Additional comments regarding this issue can be found on the Saipan Scuba Diving Blog. www.saipanscuba.blogspot.com.

References include:

- www.Fishbase.com
- Trade in Live Reef Fish for Food – Part 1 and part 2 from PBS www.PBS.com
- The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural
- Resources (or World Conservation Union) Red list page (aka IUCN Red list)
- The Maldives Odyssey Live-aboard captains log also at www.PBS.com
- *Reef Life – Natural History and Behaviors of Marine Fishes and Invertebrates*. Denise Nielsen Tackett & Larry Tackett
- *Micronesian Reef Fishes – A Field Guide for Divers and Aquarist.* Robert F. Myers

CLARIFICATION

From Page 13

should be left alone. Finally, given that many folks are aware of the RARE campaign, I would like to take the opportunity to promote the Bumphead Parrofish, which certainly appears to be "rare" in the CNMI, as the focal species for the CNMI.

Michael Trianni
Fishery Research Section
Division of Fish and Wildlife

A response to Mr. Propst

Ai adai, Mr. Propst, you almost wrote a novel about Taotao Tano. Slow down, control that temper or you might just do a No. 2 in your pants. Anyway, I finally had some time to respond to you out of my busy pressing schedule. I normally don't waste my time on nonproductive issues, but I thought I'd give you a response. You may not realize this but a common, ordinary, uneducated person such as myself really got you going. Now who's uneducated? You see, Ed, the thinking process of a common ordinary person will never be comparable to an educated person such as yourself for we are far more advanced. I read your novel and it's pretty sad that a kid like you who grew up in the CNMI and is supposedly educated completely went the opposite direction without further studies or research. It's almost as if you were in a battle waving a white flag, not knowing that the war had ended weeks ago.

The letters we had sent out were meant to distract you and your so-called blogger group, and we had the last laugh when you fell into our covert operation. You see, Ed, we believe that it is you that needs some educating because while you were busy writing a novel on Taotao Tano, we where hammering Wendy Doromal through the back doors of Washington, along with her instigators. This entire federal battle is not about the nonresident guest workers; it's about the political agenda behind the instigators involved in coercing innocent people into believing something that was only benefiting themselves in the end.

Did it ever occur to you that the nonresident workers had co-existed in harmony with our local people in our homeland for many years, some of us are godparents to their children, or Kumaries and Kumparies or in-laws? But when the DEKADA, Human Dignity and other foreign organizations surfaced, they created so much animosities, dissensions and divisions in our community. Did it ever occur to you that if we knew what was going on sooner and Taotao Tano had been born earlier, we would have all sat down and discussed these issues? Did ever occur to you that maybe we could have helped each other in many ways to improve everyone's standard of living here in our homeland? Instead we were all silent, entrusting our elected leaders that they were doing their jobs for years. Today, all of us including the nonresidents are left cleaning up the trash our leaders and their business associates left behind and as a matter fact some of them are still in office as we speak.

Mr. Propst, the United Nations is made up of different people from different nations and countries and they all come in circle to discuss major and detrimental issues affecting mankind and somehow they manage to conclude by a majority to deliver a sound stable solution as one people. As president of Taotao Tano I have no animosities against anyone in our homeland for we are all humans and we do not live in a perfect world and no one is perfect. It's all about the moral principle of this instigated and conspired fast-tracked federal legislation that concerns Taotao Tano the most. Do not be so gullible, Ed. Stop, look, listen and learn, because knowledge is power.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

Business

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA
5,615.300
Down 54.100
(-0.95%)

HONG KONG
23,354.78
Up 433.11
(-1.89%)

JAKARTA
2,630.981
Up 38.9109
(+1.50%)

TOKYO
13,090.24
Up 68.28
(-0.52%)

K. LUMPUR
1,417.52
Up 10.14
(-0.72%)

MANILA
3,223.35
Up 22.45
(+0.70%)

SINGAPORE
2,976.23
Up 50.00
(+1.71%)

SEOUL
1,634.03
Down 9.26
(-0.56%)

BANGKOK
827.28
Up 9.79
(+1.20%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
12,373.41
+133.40

NASDAQ
2,320.04
-0.02

S&P
1,348.86
+9.73

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.1062
British Pound	0.5104
Canadian Dollar	1
Chinese Renmbi	7.1859
Euro	0.6863
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8002
Indian Rupee	39.645
Indonesian Rupiah	9252.5
Japanese Yen	107.205
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2327
New Zealand Dollar	1.2673
Philippine Peso	40.8
Singapore Dollar	1.4162
South Korean Won	945.55
Swiss Franc	1.1023
Taiwan Dollar	31.654
Thailand Baht	32.005

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Continental profit sharing at record $158M

HOUSTON—Continental Airlines will distribute today a record $158 million in profit sharing payments to tens of thousands of employees at more than 200 locations worldwide.

Continental's profit sharing plan is the most generous in the industry.

"Thanks to the outstanding efforts of my co-workers over the past year, Continental will be distributing $158 million in profit sharing, the largest profit sharing payout in our company's history," Continental chairman and CEO Larry Kellner said. "We continue to work together to deliver solid financial and operational results and I am extremely delighted to share the company's success with our more than 45,000 coworkers worldwide."

When checks are distributed today, Valentine's Day, Continental employees will have received $269 million in profit sharing payments in the last 12 months. This is the second consecutive year that the company will be sharing profits with employees. Last year, Continental paid $111 million in profit sharing for 2006.

Personal Delivery

Kellner will hand out profit sharing checks today, Valentine's Day, at the airline's New York hub at Newark Liberty International Airport, while President Jeff Smisek will distribute checks to the airline's employees at its Houston hub at Bush Intercontinental Airport and other Houston locations. Other Continental executives will appear at dozens of locations throughout the Continental system, including Los Angeles, Orlando, Salt Lake City, London, Mexico City and Tokyo, to personally distribute profit sharing checks and celebrate the record achievement.

Most generous plan in the industry

Continental has the best profit-sharing plan in the industry. The plan shares 30 percent of the first $250 million of pre-tax income, 25 percent of the next $250 million and 20 percent of amounts over $500 million.

Profit sharing and other employee incentives

In addition to profit sharing, Continental's employees receive cash payments for reaching on-time performance goals. For 2007, employees earned $33 million in on-time incentive payments, or $755 per employee, for finishing 10 out of 12 months among the top three of the network carriers for on time performance.

The on-time arrival incentive program pays monthly cash payments when the airline hits targets for on-time arrivals as reported by DOT. Eligible employees receive $100 when Continental comes in first among the six network carriers in on-time performance. Employees receive $65 when the company finishes second or third among the six network carriers or when Continental's on-time percentage is 80 or better, even if the company does not finish in the top three.

Continental Airlines is the world's fifth largest airline. For more company information, visit continental.com. ***(Continental)***

US announces plan to delay foreclosures

WASHINGTON (AP)—Homeowners threatened with foreclosure would in some instances get a 30-day reprieve under an initiative the Bush administration announced Tuesday. Critics attacked the proposal as far short of what is needed to resolve a serious financial crisis that is threatening millions of families with the loss of their homes.

Under the new program, six of the nation's largest financial institutions said they will begin contacting homeowners who are 90 or more days overdue on their monthly mortgage payments. The homeowners will be given the opportunity to put the foreclosure process on pause for 30 days while the lenders look for a way to make the mortgage more affordable.

The new program will be available to the holders of all types of mortgages from prime to subprime and represents a widening of an initiative announced by President Bush in December that offers a freeze on subprime mortgage rates that are scheduled to reset to sharply higher rates for borrowers who qualify for the assistance.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Budget deficit running at faster pace

WASHINGTON (AP)—The federal budget deficit is running at a pace that is more than double last year's imbalance through the first four months of the budget year. In its monthly review of the government's finances, the Treasury Department said Tuesday that the budget was in surplus in January, but totals $87.7 billion so far this budget year, double the $42.2 billion imbalance recorded during the same period in 2007. The new budget year started last Oct. 1. The Bush administration sent its final budget request to Congress last week, projecting that the deficit for all of 2008 will total $410 billion, very close to the all-time high in dollar terms of $413 billion in 2004. So far this year, federal spending is 8.3 percent ahead of last year's pace, at $949.1 billion. That is far ahead of the 3.2 percent increase in revenues, which have totaled $861.4 billion in the current budget year.

BlackBerry outage caused by upgrade

NEW YORK (AP)—The company behind the BlackBerry smart phones said a three-hour e-mail outage Monday was caused by an upgrade designed to increase capacity. Research in Motion Ltd. Tuesday said the upgrade was part of "routine and ongoing efforts," and that similar upgrades in the past had caused no problems. The outage, which started about 3:30 p.m. EST, annoyed subscribers who are used to checking and writing e-mail whenever they're in cellular coverage and able to make voice calls. It affected only some of the BlackBerry users in North America—for others, the service kept working fully. It was the second major outage for the service in less than a year. In April, a minor software upgrade crashed the system for all users.

GTA TeleGuam has new board member

TAMUNING, Guam—GTA TeleGuam announced last week that Lourdes "Lou" A. Leon Guerrero is the newest member of its board of directors. Leon Guerrero joined the GTA TeleGuam board effective Feb. 1, 2008.

Leon Guerrero

Dan Moffat, CEO and president of GTA TeleGuam said, "We are very pleased to welcome Lou to the GTA TeleGuam board. As a bank president and former senator, Lou brings solid local business expertise and a strong relationship with Guam that further strengthens GTA TeleGuam's commitment to the island."

Leon Guerrero was born and raised on Guam. She is a graduate of California State University with a bachelor's degree in nursing. She also has a master's degree in Public Health from University of California at Los Angeles and is currently attending the University of Washington Pacific Coast Banking School.

Leon Guerrero is married to attorney Jeff Cook and together they have two children, Joaquin and Mariana.

Leon Guerrero joins fellow GTA TeleGuam board members Susan Eichor, Peter Gill, Dick Grimm, Warren Haruki, John Parkinson and Adm. Tom Fargo. In addition, Moffat and Shamrock investors Steve Royer and Will Wynperle serve on the GTA TeleGuam board.

GTA is Guam's leading full-service telecommunications company providing fixed landline communications to nearly 65,000 business and residential customers. For more information, visit www.gta.net. ***(GTA)***

ELEVENTH CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Eleventh CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that it will be having a Special Board Meeting on Friday, February 15, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. at BOE Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Retirement Fund Building, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Preliminary
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda
- d. Adoption of Minutes

II. Public Comments[1]

III. Reports
- a. Chair
- b. Committees
  - i. CIP
  - ii. FPA
- c. Commissioner

IV. Old Business

V. New Business
- a. Differential Compensation for Special Education Related Services Personnel
- b. Salary Cap of New Appointments – Exemption for SPED RSPs
- c. Additional compensation for program managers & principals for work done after regular hours
- d. BOE Education Vision
- e. Response to House HEW Committee inquiries
- f. BOE Membership in Chamber of Commerce

VI. Executive Session[2]
- a. Legal Counsel's Report
- b. Personnel
- c. Other matters

VII. Miscellaneous Matters (?)

VIII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting

IX. Adjournment

Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes and related to issues on the agenda.
Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office

INVITATION FOR BID

IFB 08-001 - Paupau Beach Marine-Environmental and Marine-Culture Center Demonstration Center Construction Project

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for construction of the Paupau Beach Marine and Mari-Culture Demonstration Center, in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. Specifications and Scope of Work may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8: 30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:30 p.m. or at the Project Briefing Conference.

There will be a **Project Briefing Conference** conducted at 9:00 a.m., March 4th, 2008, at the Northern Marianas College As Terlaje Campus, CREES conference room, bldg. F. Construction drawings and diagrams may be purchased at Pacific Quick Print at Bidder/Proposers expense. All prospective bidders must pay a bid security deposit and pick up a bid package before obtaining the drawings and diagrams specifications. Please contact Mr. Glenn Keaton or Mr. Lee Bowen at 234-5498 for more information.

Bid Packages are due March 14th, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with NMC and CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "**Local Business Preference**", as amended by Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is **not available to local bidders** in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the federal law granting the funding for this project. For bidders located **outside of the CNMI**: You may request a copy of the Invitation for Bid via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Duane R.T. Sablan (duanes@nmcnet.edu)

Bidders are advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act and the labor standard provisions for wage rate determination of the Commonwealth. All labor on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $3.55 per hour which took effect on July 25, 2007 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour every six (6) months until the hourly rate equals that of the Federal Minimum Wage of $7.50 per hour.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 that requires recipients of HUD funds and the contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

All bidders are hereby notified that the Northern Marianas College and CNMI Government will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the bidder to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the bidder. All submittals shall become the property of NMC and will not be returned.

Nation

Obama wins 3 primaries to take lead

WASHINGTON (AP)—Barack Obama powered past Hillary Rodham Clinton in the race for Democratic convention delegates Tuesday on a night of triumph sweetened with outsized primary victories in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

"Tonight we're on our way," Obama told cheering supporters in Madison, Wis. "But we know how much further we have to go," he added, celebrating eight straight victories over Clinton, the former first lady now struggling in a race she once commanded.

The Associated Press count of delegates showed Obama with 1,210. Clinton had 1,188, falling behind for the first time since the campaign began. Neither was close to the 2,025 needed to win the nomination.

His victories were by large margins—he was gaining about 75 percent of the vote in the nation's capital and nearly two-thirds in Virginia. In Maryland, he was winning close to 60 percent.

By contrast, Clinton was attempting to retool her campaign in the midst of a losing streak. Her deputy campaign manager resigned, the second high-level departure in as many days.

Campaigning in Texas, where she hopes to triumph on March 4, she said she was looking ahead, not back.

"I'm tested, I'm ready. Now let's make it happen," she said.

Republican front-runner John McCain won all three GOP primaries, adding to his insurmountable lead in delegates for the Republican nomination. He congratulated Mike Huckabee, his sole remaining major rival and a potential vice presidential running mate, then turned his focus on the Democrats.

"We know where either of their candidates will lead this country, and we dare not let them," he told supporters in Alexandria, Va. "They will paint a picture of the world in which America's mistakes are a greater threat to our security than the malevolent intentions of an enemy that despises us and our ideals."

Interviews with voters leaving the polls showed Obama narrowly defeated Clinton among white voters in Virginia, 52 percent to 47 percent, the first time he has done that in a Southern state and only the fourth time he has done so in a competitive primary this year. Clinton won the white vote by 10 percentage points in Maryland. He won 90 percent of the black vote in Virginia and almost as much in Maryland. She won a majority of white women in both states, though by less than she is accustomed to. He won among white men in Virginia, and they split that vote in Maryland.

In all, there were 168 Democratic delegates at stake Tuesday.

Clinton pins hopes on Texas rebound

EL PASO, Texas (AP)—Trying to overcome a string of losses and a staff shake-up, Hillary Rodham Clinton sought new energy Tuesday night from a boisterous crowd of about 12,000 in a state she hopes will provide a rebound in her quest for the Democratic presidential nomination. Clinton arrived at the packed University of Texas at El Paso basketball arena as voters were giving Obama victories in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C. But her sights were set on the March 4 Texas and Ohio primaries and on President Bush. "I'm tested, I'm ready, let's make it happen," she yelled to cheering supporters. Clinton's deputy campaign manager resigned Tuesday, the latest departure in a staff shake-up follows string of losses to Barack Obama.

McCain 'fired up' to face Democrats

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP)—Republican John McCain said he was "fired up and ready to go" against either Democratic presidential contender as he celebrated primary victories Tuesday in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. "We do not yet know for certain who will have the honor of being the Democratic Party's nominee for president," McCain said of Barack Obama and Hillary Rodham Clinton. "But we know where either of their candidates will lead this country, and we dare not let them." He told supporters at a hotel in Alexandria, Va.: "My friends, I promise you, I am fired up and ready to go."

ACROSS THE NATION

Student wounded at SoCal junior high

OXNARD, Calif. (AP)—A 15-year-old boy was shot and wounded in a junior high school computer lab Tuesday and another eighth-grader was taken into custody, authorities said. Worried parents gathered outside the 1,150-student E.O. Green Junior High School, which was locked down. Students were released classroom by classroom. The wounded boy had improved since arriving at St. John's Regional Medical Center in extremely serious condition, police spokesman David Keith said. "We are guardedly optimistic he will make a recovery," he said. The 14-year-old suspect was being booked for investigation of attempted murder, Oxnard Police Chief John Crombach said.

New dinosaur species found in Mexico

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A Mexican paleontologist was cleaning up after lunch with a group of schoolchildren she'd been teaching to dig for bones in northeastern Mexico when she found the dinosaur bone. "I was basically collecting trash," Martha Carolina Aguillon Martinez recalled at a news conference Tuesday. Twelve years later, after much digging, drilling and piecing together, it became clear that the helmet-crested, duck-billed dinosaur didn't belong to any previously identified species. This was new. The composition of its skull—with a nose on top of its head and elongated nasal passages—meant its call was probably one of its most unique aspects, said Terry Gates, a Utah Museum of Natural History paleontologist who was part of a team of Mexican, American and Canadian experts involved with the excavation. "They were like little trumpeters," he said. "This is totally odd and freakish."

Injuries in 18-vehicle California pileup

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—Eighteen vehicles piled up in a chain-reaction accident in dense fog Tuesday, scattering mangled cars along a highway and sending 10 people to hospitals, the California Highway Patrol said. The crash, reported just before 8:20 a.m., temporarily shut down part of the southbound lanes of Highway 99 south of Fresno. The CHP had initially said 50 vehicles were involved. Rescue crews had to cut three people out of a car that slammed into a tractor-trailer rig, CHP Officer Joseph Miller said. One woman was pinned in her car for almost 40 minutes while crews attempted to pry her out from between two big rigs.

Private crews to fight 'dormant volcano'

PORT WENTWORTH, Ga. (AP)—Specialists arrived Tuesday to help extinguish a five-day-old sugar-refinery fire burning too intensely and deeply for standard firefighting to douse, and officials feared the deadly blaze could once again burst into explosions. Thick masses of molten sugar were smoldering at temperatures as high as 4,000 degrees, even after a helicopter dumped thousands of gallons on the fire. "We're dealing with a dormant volcano full of lava," said Capt. Matt Stanley from the fire department in nearby Savannah. Six people are confirmed dead in Thursday's fire and two other workers remained missing Tuesday.

Asia

AP

A soldier searches people coming into the capital Tuesday Feb. 12, 2008, outside Dili, the capital of East Timor.

East Timor in state of emergency

DILI, East Timor (AP)—Armored U.N. vehicles guarded East Timor's leaders Tuesday under a state of emergency declared after rebel soldiers critically wounded the Nobel Peace Prize-winning president and fired at the prime minister's convoy.

The army chief blamed the United Nations—which oversees a 1,400-member international police force—for failing to protect the country's two top leaders and demanded an outside investigation.

But the U.N. deputy head for East Timor said President Jose Ramos-Horta had wanted his security to be provided by national authorities.

Ramos-Horta was airlifted to an Australian hospital where surgeons said Tuesday he was "extremely lucky to be alive" after they operated for three hours to remove bullet fragments and repair chest wounds.

"His condition remains extremely serious but by the same token, stable," Dr. Len Notaros, the general manager of the Royal Darwin Hospital, told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. "The next few days will be the telling point."

East Timor, a poor Southeast Asian nation of 1 million people, won independence from Indonesia in 2002 after a U.N.-sponsored ballot. It has struggled to achieve stability since an outbreak of violence in 2006, when 37 people were killed in clashes between rival security forces.

East Timor's army commander, Taur Matan Ruak said he wanted to know how foreign forces had failed in their primary task of providing security.

"How is it possible that cars transporting armed people have entered the city ... without having been detected?" he asked journalists.

Manila group urges officials to step down

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine business leaders called Tuesday for the resignation of senior officials accused of trying to cover up a corruption scandal linked to the president's husband and vowed to launch nonviolent protests to push for a change in government.

Allegations by former government consultant Rodolfo Lozada Jr., praised by Roman Catholic bishops for exposing corruption, are the latest storm to hit President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's government.

The Senate has been investigating a corruption-tainted US$330 million government broadband contract with China's ZTE Corp. Lozada was a government consultant for the 2007 project, which Arroyo has since scrapped due to the controversy.

Senior officials at a Senate hearing Monday denied Lozada's claims that they detained him to stop him from testifying in the scandal.

"We must see to it that those who are revealed to have broken the law, no matter how high up, must be made to account for their transgression," the influential Makati Business Club said.

Pro-democracy protest in Myanmar

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Supporters of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi protested Tuesday to demand democracy in Myanmar, days after the military regime said it would hold elections in 2010 under a new constitution likely to entrench the junta's powerful position.

Some two dozen members of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, shadowed by plainclothes police, gathered peacefully outside the party's headquarters to complain that the junta's moves toward democracy are insufficient. It was a rare display of public displeasure in the tightly controlled country.

Last week, the regime said that a general election would be held in 2010 after a referendum this May to approve a constitution written under the guidance of the junta and ensuring the military a major future role.

It was the first time the government has set dates for specific steps in its so-called road map to democracy, which has been widely criticized for failing to include any input from Suu Kyi's party.

Human rights groups have already denounced the referendum and election announced Saturday, saying they would merely prolong and institutionalize the military's role as the country's key power broker.

The National League for Democracy has charged that the junta was trying to draft a constitution unilaterally, and it therefore "could not be expected to guarantee democ-

Japanese upset over alleged rape case

TOKYO (AP)—Senior Japanese officials expressed anger Tuesday after the arrest of a U.S. Marine accused of raping a 14-year-old girl on the southern island of Okinawa, with the prime minister calling the situation "unforgivable."

Officials demanded the U.S. ensure greater discipline among its forces. U.S. troops' conduct in Japan is often a source of tension, especially since 1995, when another rape case involving U.S. servicemen enraged the population.

Staff Sgt. Tyrone Luther Hadnott, a 38-year-old Marine from Camp Courtney in Okinawa, has been accused of attacking the girl in a parked car Sunday night.

World

Iraqi threatens to disband parliament

BAGHDAD (AP)—The speaker of Iraq's fragmented parliament threatened Tuesday to disband the legislature, saying it is so riddled with distrust it appears unable to adopt the budget or agree on a law setting a date for provincial elections.

Disbanding parliament would prompt new elections within 60 days and further undermine Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's shaky government, which is limping along with nearly half of the 40 Cabinet posts vacant.

The disarray undermines the purpose of last year's U.S. troop "surge"—to bring down violence enough to allow the Iraqi government and parliament to focus on measures to reconcile differences among minority Sunnis and Kurds and the majority Shiites. Violence is down dramatically, but political progress languishes.

Iraq's constitution allows Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, the hot-tempered speaker and a member of the minority Sunni faction, to dissolve parliament if one-third of its members request the move and a majority of lawmakers approve. Al-Mashhadani said he already had sufficient backing for the move from five political blocs, but he refused to name them.

Al-Mashhadani said the Iraqi treasury had already lost $3 billion by failing to pass the budget before the end of 2007. He did not explain how the money was lost.

He blamed the lack of a budget on Kurdish politicians who have refused to back down from a demand that their regional and semiautonomous government be guaranteed 17 percent of national income.

The 17 percent formula for Kurds was applied to past budgets, but some Sunni and Shiite lawmakers sought to lower it to about 14 percent. The argument is that the Kurdish population is closer to 14 percent of Iraq's total than 17 percent as Kurds insist. There has been no census in decades.

Australia apologizes to Aborigines

CANBERRA,Australia(AP)—Aborigines organized breakfast barbecues in the Outback, giant TV screens went up in state capitals, and schools allowed students to watch the telecast of Australia's apology Wednesday for policies that degraded its indigenous people.

In a historic parliamentary vote that supporters said would open a new chapter in race relations, lawmakers unanimously adopted Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's motion on behalf of all Australians.

"We apologize for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians," Rudd said in Parliament, reading from the motion.

Aborigines remain the country's poorest and most disadvantaged group, and Rudd has made improving their lives one of his government's top priorities.

As part of that campaign, Aborigines were invited for the first time to give a traditional welcome Tuesday at the official opening of the Parliament session—symbolic recognition that the land on which the capital was built was taken from Aborigines without compensation.

The apology is directed at tens of thousands of Aborigines who were forcibly taken from their families as children under now abandoned assimilation policies.

"We apologize for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians," the apology motion says.

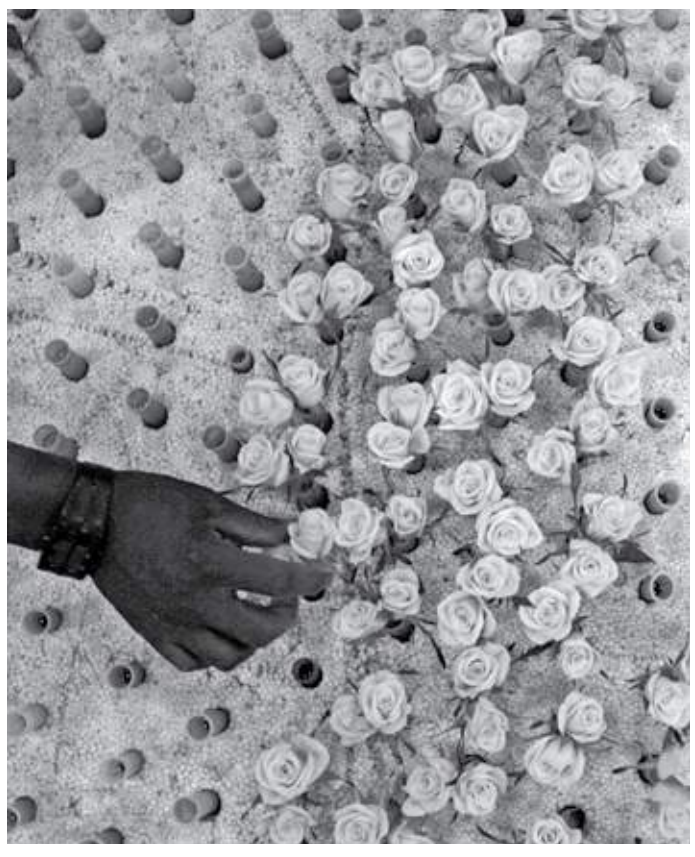
Kenya's violence threatens its flower exports

NAIVASHA, Kenya (AP)—In a country strangled by anger and fear, it is taking armed escorts and emergency airlifts to make sure that Kenya's most warmhearted export—the rose—arrives in time for Valentine's Day.

Kenyan flowers—mostly roses—account for a quarter of Europe's cut flower imports, and Kenyan growers have been pushing to keep exports up for the holiday despite ethnic violence that has paralyzed the East African country.

They've chartered planes to embattled western cities, enlisted police to protect flower-truck convoys and made pleading cell phone calls to frightened workers urging them to return.

It seems to be working—European buyers say they haven't seen a shortage of Kenyan roses. But flower exports require predictability, and if unrest continues, Kenya's flower industry could quickly follow tourism as the next shattered pillar of the economy.



AP

A worker packages roses for export at a flower farm in Naivasha, Kenya, Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2008.

Israel to build more in east Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel announced plans Tuesday to build more than 1,000 homes in disputed east Jerusalem, infuriating the Palestinians and triggering a new crisis in already troubled peace talks.

Palestinian officials accused Israel of undermining efforts to reach a peace agreement by the end of the year and urged a halt to the project.

The fate of east Jerusalem is the thorniest issue in the peace talks. Israel captured the area in the 1967 Middle East war, later formally annexing it and building a string of neighborhoods that are now home to 180,000 Israelis.

Israel expects to retain Jewish neighborhoods in east Jerusalem under a peace deal, but the Palestinians see construction there as threatening a final agreement.

The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem as the capital of a future independent state and have been urging Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to halt construction in the area.

Environment

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

During the break, Lt Gov. Timothy Villagomez speaks to the MHS My Wave students who attended the IYOR symposium.

Reef celebrations around the globe

(COCO) –2008 is the year of the reef, many countries and organizations around the globe have launched events, signed proclamations, coordinated festivals or opened museums to commemorate this occasion.

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) held a press briefing on January 24 and a symposium on January 25, 2008 in Washington, D.C. The briefing brought coral reef experts and managers from the United States, Mexico, France, and Bonaire to officially inaugurate the International Year of the Reef 2008, while the symposium showcased International Year of the Reef (IYOR) activities taking place around the world.

The CNMI was one of the first jurisdictions to launch its International Year of Reef celebration on January 18 with a proclamation signing by Governor Fitial followed by the State of the Reef report by John Starmer, CRM Biologist, and Peter Houk, DEQ Biologist. The report can be viewed at http://www.cnmicoralreef.net/CNMI_reef_ecosystem_2008_phouk2.ppt

Germany launched its celebration on January 25 during the international water sports show, "Boot2008." This is one of the largest water sport, yachting, and diving fair in Europe. Malaysia plans to launch its celebration on February 20.

Guam launched its IYOR celebration with a proclamation on February 1.

Below is a list of countries that have registered their IYOR plans:

Australia , Bahamas, Barbados, Bonaire, Brazil, Egypt, Fiji, France, Federated States of Micronesia, Germany, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Palau, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, including, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and U.S. Virgin Islands.

For more information about how each country proposes to celebrate the year of the reef, visit www.iyor.org.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

John Starmer, marine biologist for the Coastal Resources Management Office, presents the changes and threats to CNMI coral reefs.

'Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program'

(EPA via COCO)—This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits from eligible entities project proposals to receive financial assistance through the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program.

CARE is a unique community-based, community-driven, multimedia demonstration program designed to help communities understand and reduce risks due to toxics and environmental pollutants from all sources.

The CARE grant program works with the eligible entities to help their communities form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive understanding of the many sources of risk from toxics and environmental pollutants, set priorities, and identify and carry out projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level.

CARE's long-term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve human health and local environments into the future.

The objective of the CARE grant program is to work collaboratively within the community to investigate the effectiveness of the CARE process--whether this cross-Agency, multi-media program provides greater environmental benefits than either non-collaborative or single media approaches.

EPA will award two types of cooperative agreements (Level I and Level II) under this solicitation as part of the CARE grant program.

Information about the CARE program and Request for Proposals may be obtained at http://www.epa.gov/CARE/agreements.htm#apply .

Life & Style

'My Funny Valentine' at Club V

The 16 contestants in the Grand Diva Lip Sync Contest will be having a showdown tonight, Feb. 14, 2008, at the Saipan Grand Hotel's Club V, where they will showcase their talents in a lip sync face off called "My Funny Valentine."

The PTI text star DIVA will also be launched at the same event, during which friends, fans, and supporters of each contestant can begin texting in their votes on who should be declared the Diva. Each contestant will be assigned a specific number, through which texters can send in their votes.

The contestants are Jackie Madrigal, Linda Cullen, Jaz, Jolly, Sunshine, Patricia, Jackie Bernabe, Lyka, Tammy, Venus, Sharmaine, Angel, Jolina, Krystala, Milkshake, and Monique

The show will be hosted again by the Tres Marianas (Marconi, Hapi and Paul).

"For people who would like to laugh this Valentine's Day, this show is a must-see after their Valentine date," said Saipan Grand's events manager Oscar Yema.

Doors open at 9pm and the party will last until 2am, featuring resident DJ from Tokyo, DJ Tattinouk. There will be a $10 cover charge, with one free drink.

The contest actually started three weeks ago during the Laffa Adai Thursday at the Southern Cross Bar, hosted by the Tres Marianas.

The contestants were divided into three batches and performed every Thursday, with a Star of the Night chosen during each performance.

Batch 1's Star of the Night was Patricia. Batch 2 was Tammy, while Batch 3 was Monique.

To make reservations for tonight's event, call 285-66-16 and look for Oscar Yema. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Batch 1 Diva contestants are from left, Sunshine, Linda Cullen, Jackie Madrigal, Jolly, Patricia, and Jaz.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Batch 2 contestants are, from left, Jackie Bernabe, Sharmaine, Diana Ross, Venus, and Lyka.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Tress Marianas, from left, are Hapi, Marconi, and Paul.

Mad (Lib) About You

By DAN ZAK
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Because nothing says true love on Valentine's Day quite like a fill-in-the-blank sonnet, we asked our reporter-poet Dan Zak (who clearly loved Mad Libs as a kid) to prepare this heartfelt ode for you and that special someone to work on together.

■ Your (one-syllable body part, plural) are ruddy in winter's harsh light

■ As heaven lets tumble its frozen tears.

■ On Valentine's the world seems (one-syllable adjective) and right

■ As we sigh and (three-syllable verb) through the years.

■ But (one-syllable exclamation)! Think not of seeking affections

■ Elsewhere. Remember you are mine tonight.

■ Love's not composed of endless directions

■ But of something freer — a (one-syllable animal, singular) in flight.

■ Shall I compare thee to my last lover?

■ Thou art more (two-syllable adjective), my sweet valentine.

■ Your breath smells of (two-syllable food item), your lids hover

■ O'er eyes whose fairness rivals spring's sunshine.

■ Love's a (one-syllable noun), they say, so gird your loins now;

■ I'll take you to (a desirable place, one-syllable), if you show me how.

Ol' Mr. Cupid

By ROSE T. ADA-HOCOG

I've always wished for a perfect life
A perfect partner, a perfect home
Perfect friends
To be well liked and well known

Many times, I wish myself into migraine
Not living my perfect life, has always been a pain
Well.....
Many storms later, I realize
My imperfect life is perfectly swell

I breathe, I live, I laugh, I cry
I sleep, I wake, to a bright blue sky
My life is not perfect, I do not care
Cause...to my left, to my right
My imperfect friends and family are there

So on the day that Ol' Mr. Cupid draws his bow
I want them to remember, I want them to know
My life was, is, and will always be
More than perfect...cause they're sharing it with me.

Valentine Promise

By ROSE T. ADA-HOCOG

The road we travel
Is a long and difficult road
Your troubles and mine
We both have heavy loads

Yet, through the many heartaches and pain
Through all of life's demand
Through our rough and tumble years
Together, we still stand

Now, I don't what tomorrow holds
Nor do I care
Today is all that matters
Cause today you are here

I cannot promise to love you for the rest of your life
I can promise my love for you will last for the rest of mine

I Love You,

Your Sweet Valentine

What's love got to do with it?

By ELLEN MCCARTHY
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Of course it's a sham—this ridiculous day.

It's the king of all marketing hoodwinks. A racket for romance purveyors of every size, shape and standard of shamelessness. The jewelers and florists and sugar pushers, joined this year by the Don Juan telecom executives. ("Show her how much you really care ... with unlimited texts for only $10 a month!")

It's a torture device for singles, a minefield for new boyfriends, a fast track to a squabble for absent-minded spouses.

Of course it's all that. It's Valentine's Day.

But it's also an opportunity—for us. Because in all its relentlessness, Valentine's Day puts something far greater on the brain. *Love.*

It brings to mind passion and rapture, fulfillment and comfort, infatuation, devotion and wonder. Slivers of perfect heaven in a haywire world.

"Love is an endless mystery, for it has nothing else to explain it," proclaimed the poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore. Which seems true, except for the part where every other poet-philosopher and heartsick pop star attempt to explain it.

And why not? It's on the brain, on Valentine's Day and every other day. Causing elation, devastation and the occasional out-and-out war.

So anyway, this year we thought it was time to talk. Not of roses, champagne and chocolate, but of what is really in our heads and hearts when we speak of love.

To the poet-philosophers and pop stars, we've added four relationship gurus who gamely completed the statements of love we began.

MICHELLE MONKOU
Romance author

Your first love ...
is important because it sets the bar for future relationships.

Love at first sight ...
is true. I'm insistent that my husband saw me and fell madly in love and hasn't emerged from my spell after almost 25 years together.

After a breakup, never ...
hang on and become a crazy, deluded "Fatal Attraction" loser. Let it go.

The best part ...
of being in a romantic relationship is having your best friend at your side.

Fairy tales tend to leave out the part ...
about physical consummation to keep any disappointments and regrets out of the picture.

You can never predict ...
how your loved one will age. This means that you should look carefully at parents and older aunts and uncles. I'm adopted, so the mystery is intact.

When it comes to relationships, people tend to underestimate ...
how easy it is to take someone for granted. Like a diet gone wrong, you stop working at it, then wonder why your pants seams are ripping apart.

When things get really bad (lovers' spat rather than abuse) ...
be careful what you tell your mother. When the dust settles and you've made up, Mom may not be so forgiving of your significant other.

Heartache is ...
not the end of the world. Everything in life is a lesson. Your coping and survival skills will kick in.

Valentine's Day ...
is good PR to show co-workers that you're in a romantic relationship.

JEFF BROWN
Host of "The Quiet Storm" on WHUR (96.3 FM) in Washington.

Love at first sight ...
I don't really believe in love at first sight. From my experience, it's not what appears on the outside, but what actually lives on the inside. Character and integrity are the important ingredients. They don't always accompany beauty.

After a breakup, never ...
call and tell your ex why the relationship ended. It's always best to just move on and try as best as you can to remain civil. Some relationships are simply not meant to be.

The longer you're with someone ...
the more you are able to see that individual for who they really are.

Fairy tales tend to leave out ...
the truth about relationships. It's not what you hope for, but what you are willing to work for in a relationship. I think most people don't really want to work at building meaningful, lasting relationships. It takes up too much time — a lady friend actually told me that.

You can never predict ...
how a relationship is going to turn out. I don't think you should try. I think that takes the fun out of the possibilities.

I wish I had known when I was 19 that ...
in the words of the singing group the ... Spinners, "Love Don't Love Nobody."

When it comes to relationships, people tend to underestimate ...
the importance of being truthful.

Valentine's Day...
... is every day when you're with the right person.

In the end, what's most important is ...
that you are willing to give yourself unconditionally. If you can do that, anything is possible.

SANDY M. FERNANDEZ
Editor of The Washington Post Magazine's "Date Lab" feature

Your first love ...
The powerful futbol duo of Enrique and Chuck, in third grade. Why stop at one?

Love at first sight ...
can happen—but you usually just think it's love at first sight.

The longer you're with someone ...
the more you wonder what the %&&% you were doing all those years.

They say you know when you know. I think that's ...
100 percent, absolutely, no question, true. And you know when you don't know, too, though often you won't admit it.

I wish I'd known when I was 19 that ...
that maxim about love being hard work is only for when you're, like, married with kids. But if you're just dating and it's such hard work — buh-bye. Life's too short.

When it comes to relationships, people tend to underestimate ...
how easy it feels when it's really right.

When things get really bad ...
ask your friends to give you their unvarnished advice. Take it.

The most romantic ...
note I ever got was from my husband, after I groused about missing the magic of our early days: "Mr. Romance would like to take you out tonight. But since he's busy, I'm taking you out instead."

Heartache is ...
an important and noble emotion to feel. Once. Or twice. After that, you're just being indulgent.

Valentine's Day ...
is a great excuse to get drunk and—wait a second, this is a family newspaper, right?

KEITH MILLER
Couples counselor

Your first love ...
leaves you in the clouds. On the other hand, staying in the clouds is just how you get your first love to leave.

Love at first sight ...
is what we say when we don't want to use the word "lust."

After a breakup, never ...
take all of the blame or give it all away.

The best part ...
of really loving someone is that it will help you grow up.

The longer you're with someone ...
the more you will realize they are not a clone of you!

Fairy tales tend to leave out the part ...
where you actually have to tell your partner what you need in order for them to do it.

You can never predict ...
how someone will receive your act of love, but what you have the most control over is how deep and how long and how well you love.

I wish I'd known when I was 19 that ...
there is no "one" person that is right for me. I have to be the right person first, and I'll be happy with everything after that.

When it comes to relationships, people tend to underestimate ...
how much better they will feel if they do the very hard things they are avoiding.

The most romantic ...
lover in the world is no match for the aphrodisiac called listening.

Heartache is ...
probably just indigestion. When loving has led to hurt, you'll ache all over.

Valentine's Day ...
is a mystery we should ask the aliens about when they finally find us.

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The Spiderwick Chronicles
Friday 4:00 7:20 9:30
Sat & Sun 1:00 4:00 7:20 9:30
Monday 1:00 4:00 7:20
Tue thru Thurs 4:00 7:20
Seth Rogen, Mary-Loise Parker
Fantasy, Children • Rated PG13
Synopsis
Peculiar things start to happen the moment the Grace family (Jared, his twin brother Simon, sister Mallory and their mom) leave New York and move into the secluded old house owned by their great, great uncle Arthur Spiderwick. Unable to explain the strange disappearances and accidents that seem to be happening on a daily basis, the family blames Jared. When he, Simon and Mallory investigate what"s really going on, they uncover the fantastic truth of the Spiderwick estate and of the creatures that inhabit it.

Jumper
Friday 4:05 7:25 9:40
Sat & Sun 1:05 4:05 7:25 9:40
Monday 1:05 4:05 7:25
Tue thru Thurs 4:05 7:25
Hayden Christensen, Samuel L. Jackson
Adventure, Sci-Fi • Rated PG13
Synopsis
David Rice has grown up with a mysterious power of which many have dreamed. He is completely and utterly mobile, able to zap through wormholes in the space-time fabric to any city, any building, any place at all that his mind desires. In the blink of an eye, he can "jump" from one side of the earth to the other and back again—he can tour twenty different sunsets in one night, he can have breakfast on the Egyptian Sphinx, spend the day surfing in Australia, then pop over to Paris for dinner and enjoy dessert in Japan.

Fool's Gold
Friday 4:10 7:15 9:30
Sat & Sun 1:20 4:10 7:15 9:30
Monday 1:20 4:10 7:15
Tue thru Thurs 4:10 7:15
Matthew McConaughey, Kate Hudson
Action, Adventure • Rated PG13

Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins
Friday 4:25 7:30 9:50
Sat & Sun 1:25 4:25 7:30 9:50
Monday 1:25 4:25 7:30
Tue thru Thurs 4:25 7:30
Martin Lawrence, Louis C.K.
Comedy • Rated PG13

Meet the Spartans
Friday 4:20 7:10 9:35
Sat & Sun 1:15 4:20 7:10 9:35
Monday 1:15 4:20 7:10
Tue thru Thurs 4:20 7:10
Diedrich Bader, Kevin Sorbo
Comedy • Rated PG13

Sakal, Sakali, Saklolo
Friday 4:30 7:05 9:55
Sat & Sun 1:30 4:30 7:05 9:55
Monday 1:30 4:30 7:05
Tue thru Thurs 4:30 7:05
Judy Ann Santos, Ryan Agoncillo
Comedy, Romance • Rated NR

Cloverfield
Friday @ 7:00 9:45
Sat & Sun @ 7:00 9:45
Monday @ 7:00
Tue thru Thurs @ 7:00
Michael Stahl David, Mike Vogel
Comedy, Drama • Rated PG13

27 Dresses
Friday 4:15 @ @
Sat & Sun 1:10 4:15 @ @
Monday 1:10 4:15 @
Tue thru Thurs 4:15 @
Katherine Heigl, James Marsden
Romantic Comedy • Rated PG13

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Writers vote to end 3-month walkout

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A devastating, three-month walkout that brought the entertainment industry to a standstill ended Tuesday when Hollywood writers voted to lift their union's strike order and return to work Wednesday.

The move allows some TV series to return this spring with a handful of new episodes. It also clears the way for the Academy Awards to be staged on Feb. 24 without the threat of pickets or a boycott by actors that would have dulled the glamour of Hollywood's signature celebration.

"At the end of the day, everybody won. It was a fair deal and one that the companies can live with, and it recognizes the large contribution that writers have made to the industry," Leslie Moonves, chief executive officer of CBS Corp., told The Associated Press.

Moonves was among the media executives who helped broker a deal after negotiations between the guild and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which represents studios, collapsed in acrimony in December.

AP

A member of the Writers Guild of America votes whether to accept the new tentative contract at the WGA theater in Beverly Hills, Calif., Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2008.

Residuals for TV shows and movies distributed online was the most contentious issue in the bitter dispute involving the 12,000-member union and the world's largest media companies and other producers.

Under a tentative contract approved Sunday by the union's board of directors, writers would get a maximum flat fee of about $1,200 for streamed programs in the deal's first two years and then get 2 percent of a distributor's gross in year three - a key union demand.

Other provisions include increased residual payments for downloaded movies and TV programs.

"These advances now give us a foothold in the digital age," said Patric Verrone, president of the guild's West Coast chapter. "Rather than being shut out of the future of content creation and delivery, writers will lead the way as television migrates to the Internet."

Paris Hilton brother arrested for DUI

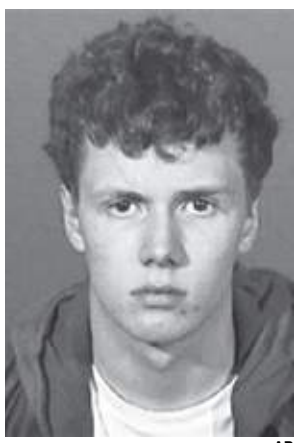
MALIBU, Calif. (AP)—Another Hilton has landed in the gray-bar hotel.

Paris Hilton's younger brother Barron Hilton was arrested Tuesday morning for allegedly driving under the influence, authorities said.

Barron Hilton was held at the Malibu station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. No other information was immediately available, said sheriff's Sgt. Diane Hecht.

As word of his arrest spread, nearly a dozen paparazzi swarmed the sheriff's station.

Paris Hilton pleaded no contest last year to alcohol-related reckless driving and was sentenced to 45 days in jail. The 26-year-old celebutante served a little more than two weeks.



AP

This police booking photo released by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department shows Barron Hilton, brother of Paris Hilton, after he was arrested Tuesday morning Feb. 11, 2008, for for allegedly driving under the influence in Malibu, Calif.

Franklin slams Beyonce Grammy intro

LOS ANGELES (AP)—When Aretha Franklin is unhappy, she does not mince words. On Tuesday, the longtime Queen of Soul slammed Beyonce Knowles' intro to Tina Turner at Sunday's Grammy Awards, in which Knowles called Turner, not Franklin, "the queen."

"I am not sure of whose toes I may have stepped on or whose ego I may have bruised between the Grammy writers and Beyonce," Franklin said in a statement issued by her publicist. "However, I dismissed it as a cheap shot for controversy."

E-mails to Knowles' publicist Yvette Noel-Schure and calls and e-mails to Recording Academy spokeswomen Jaime Sarachit and Barb Deghan were not immediately returned.

In the first few seconds of Knowles' intro to Turner's performance, she name-dropped Franklin and a long list of famed female singers. Then the "Crazy in Love" chanteuse focused on Turner.

"There is one legend who has the essence of all of those things: the glamour, the soul, the passion, the strength, the talent," said Knowles, strutting in hot pants. "Ladies and gentlemen. Stand on your feet and give it up for the queen."

At a party later that night, Knowles called Turner her "ultimate icon."

Still, Franklin ended her brief criticism on a gracious note, thanking the Grammys and the voting academy and saying, "love to Beyonce anyway."

Known for such hits as "Respect" and "Chain of Fools," Franklin tied with the Clark Sisters for best gospel performance trophy for her duet "Never Gonna Break My Faith" with Mary J. Blige.

'Spamalot' musical changes Britney lyric

NEW YORK (AP)—Britney Spears is out, Posh Spice is in—as a lyric for the Lady in the Lake in the Broadway musical "Monty Python's Spamalot."

Asked why the lyric was changed in the song "Diva's Lament," "Spamalot" author Eric Idle said Tuesday in an e-mail:

"Because we don't laugh at sad people. Mike Nichols (the show's director) requested it and he's right. We changed the lyrics in London, on tour, on Broadway and in Las Vegas. We think that it's now too sad. Britney Spears is being tortured to death and we don't want to be on that side."

The changes went into the various companies last week.

What the Lady in the Lake (currently played on Broadway by Hannah Waddingham) once sang:

"I am sick of my career
Always stuck in second gear
Up to here with frustration and with fears
I've no Grammy no rewards
I've no Tony Awards
I'm constantly replaced by Britney Spears
Britney Spears!"

It's been replaced by:

"My love life is a mess
I've got constant PMS
My career is about as hot as ice
They hate me there backstage
They say I'm too old for my age
They're trying to replace me with Posh Spice
With Posh Spice!!"

Mag tells Miley Cyrus to buckle up

YONKERS, N.Y. (AP)—Buckle up, Hannah Montana! In a blog item posted Monday, Consumer Reports magazine says 15-year-old superstar Miley Cyrus, who plays Hannah Montana on television, is seen in her new movie riding without a seat belt in the back seat of a Range Rover.

So is her father, Billy Ray Cyrus, the Yonkers-based magazine says.

The movie is the 3-D Disney concert film "Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert," which is based on Miley Cyrus' TV show and has made more than $50 million in less than two weeks.

Telephone calls and e-mails to Disney and to several of Miley Cyrus' representatives, seeking comment, were not immediately returned Monday.

The magazine says 65 percent of the 13- to 15-year-olds killed in auto accidents in 2006 were not wearing seat belts.

"It seems to us that Miley, her father and Disney had a perfect opportunity to help influence teens and counteract—rather than encourage—this trend," the blog item says.

Singles celebrate friendship at annual Valentine's dinner

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Valentine's Day is once again upon us. As a single woman, I have recognized that even on this day one can feel completely left out of things. So, last year I started a new tradition with my single women friends.

On Valentine's Day we meet for dinner. We call it "Singles Appreciation Day." Last year we had a great time together, and this year should be even more fun.

Singlehood is not something to cry about. It's something to celebrate and enjoy, just as we would the state of marriage when we find the right person. People need to learn to appreciate the value of each phase of life as we enter it. For now, I am happily appreciating the stage of being single.

—SANDY IN NORTH HIGHLANDS, CALIF.

DEAR SANDY: I'm sure I'm not the only person who admires your positive and intelligent attitude about the journey we all make through life. Today, more and more people are choosing to remain single into their late 20s and 30s—and Valentine's Day seems to have become less a holiday and more of a marketing campaign that makes the unattached feel adrift, alone and often depressed.

A wise person told me years ago that we are as happy as we make up our minds to be—and I hope more singles will learn from your example.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Last year on Valentine's Day I had many errands to run, so I started at my favorite coffee shop at 7 a.m.

At a table in front of me was an elderly couple who were already eating. I enjoy people-watching, and it was easy to observe them. The man was having trouble opening his little package of jelly. I almost went over to help him. Why didn't I? Because he was there with a lady. Sister, wife, friend? I couldn't see her left hand. If I had offered help, it might have embarrassed him. This was a buffet breakfast.

As I ate, I watched him make several slow trips for food. He put milk and sugar in her dry cereal. He cut her food and twice wiped her mouth with her napkin. He put sugar and cream in her coffee and stirred it.

When they finally finished, he helped her from her chair, helped her with her coat, straightened out her folding walker, held her arm as they left and helped her into an older model car.

That vignette made my day. Were they sweethearts? I don't know, but there certainly was a lot of love there. Not a word was spoken, but I'm sure the message was received. We could use more of that kind of "conversation" every day, not just on Valentine's Day.

—S. FROM TENNESSEE

DEAR S. FROM TENNESSEE: The demonstration of love and commitment that you witnessed transcends any message that could be given verbally, or anything that could be written on a card. You saw a demonstration of the kind of commitment that is promised when people say to each other "in sickness and in health," but few people think through when they make that vow.

Your letter touched my heart, and I thank you for sending it so I could share it with my readers on this day that celebrates love.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My 94-year-old mother, who lives in a nursing home, has had so much fun making valentines for all her grandkids—ages 17 to 46.

She sent a picture taken of herself in a bubble bath and wrote, "I hope your day is as happy as I am here in this picture. Proverbs 15:15, 'For the despondent every day brings troubles; for the happy heart, life is a continual feast!' Happy Valentine's Day!"

I am so proud of her attitude.

—KATHY IN KENNEWICK, WASH.

DEAR KATHY: And well you should be. Your mother sets an example we should all be fortunate enough to follow.

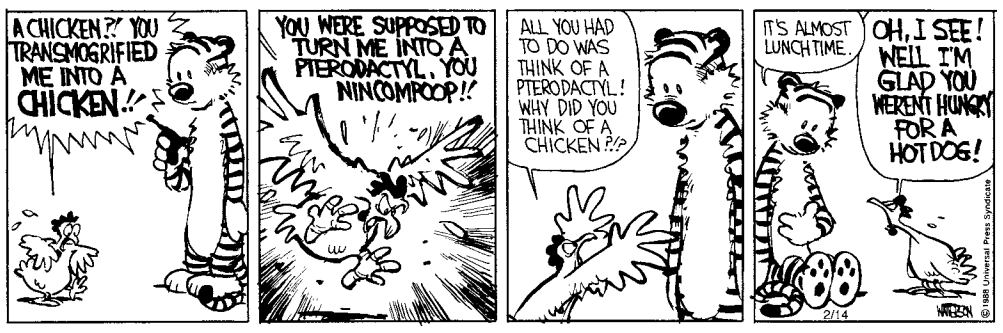
■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


A CHICKEN?! YOU TRANSMOGRIFIED ME INTO A CHICKEN!!
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TURN ME INTO A PTERODACTYL, YOU NINCOMPOOP!!
ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS THINK OF A PTERODACTYL! WHY DID YOU THINK OF A CHICKEN?!?
IT'S ALMOST LUNCHTIME.
OH, I SEE! WELL I'M GLAD YOU WEREN'T HUNGRY FOR A HOT DOG!
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WATTERSON
2/14

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY, JON
HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY, LIZ
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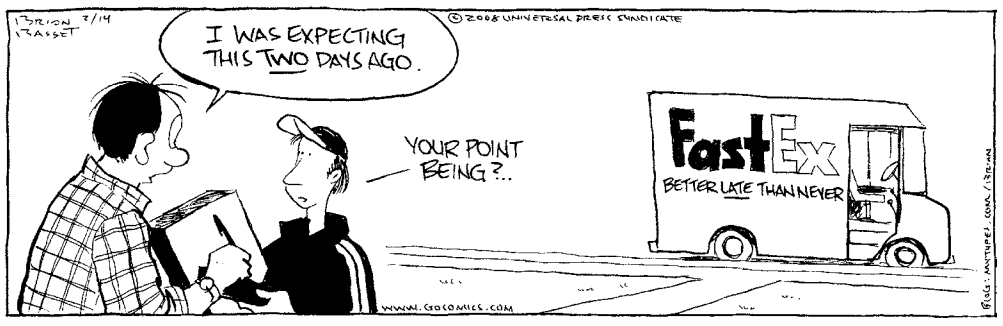
JIM DAVIS 2-14

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

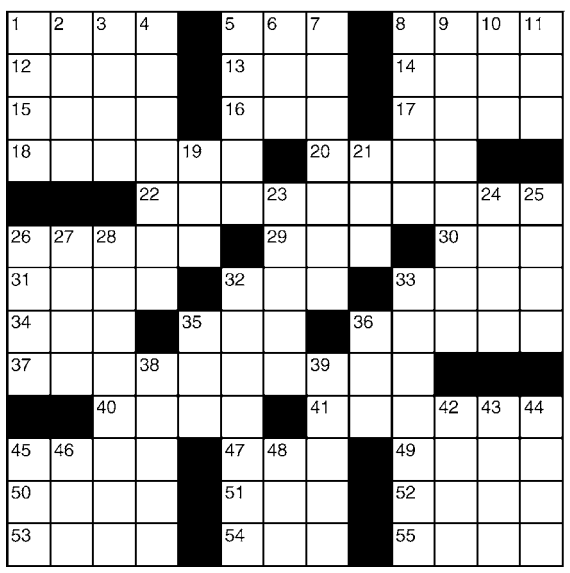
ACROSS
1 Fashion magazine
5 Poorly
8 Gush forth
12 Legal claim
13 Vast expanse
14 Take-out order
15 Witnessed
16 Billboards
17 Therefore
18 Mother of Minos
20 "— Misbehavin' "
22 Mise-en-scène
26 Divulge a secret
29 Tattooist's supply
30 Sticky stuff
31 Appellation
32 Sch. grp.
33 Periodicals, for short
34 Intention
35 Buck's mate
36 Quiz answer, maybe
37 Procedural regulation
40 Bric-a- —
41 Walt Whitman's "Song of —"
45 Rapper's home
47 Priestly garment
49 Despot
50 Island dance
51 Madam's counterpart
52 Exceptional
53 "So be it"
54 Afternoon social
55 Remove

DOWN
1 Differently
2 Place
3 Lascivious look
4 Raise in status
5 Newton or Stern
6 Got the ball rolling
7 Garfield's favorite meal
8 Office employee
9 Part of Iberia
10 Early bird?
11 Court
19 Crony
21 Annoy
23 One passing bad checks
24 Yuletide quaffs
25 Prescribed amount
26 Unforeseen problem
27 Twosome
28 Fixed
32 Internet recording
33 Orchestra leader
35 "CSI" evidence
36 Aviate
38 City-related
39 Shadow
42 Birthright barterer
43 2007 movie, "— and the Real Girl"
44 Worry
45 Dance syllable?
46 Pirates' drink
48 Tall tale

Solution time: 25 mins.

		C	A	D			P	A	L			
	P	U	R	R		K	I	L	O	S		
E	E	R	I	E		A	P	A	C	H	E	
T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	C	H	E	S	T
C	U	D		S	P	A	R	K		A	S	H
			L	E	O	N			S	T	A	Y
	S	P	U	R	N		P	I	T	H	Y	
S	T	A	G			L	A	C	Y			
A	I	G		A	G	A	V	E		S	P	A
P	L	E	A	S	U	R	E	D	O	M	E	S
	T	R	Y	I	N	G		T	W	E	A	K
		S	E	D	G	E		E	E	L	S	
			S	E	A			A	N	T		

Yesterday's answer 2-14



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Drew Bledsoe, 36; Meg Tilly, 48; Florence Henderson, 74; Hugh Downs, 87

Happy Birthday: You can make a difference if you fight for a cause you believe in. This is not the year to ponder over things but instead the year to see and do. Your creative imagination will enable you to find solutions to whatever you face. Strive for perfection. Your numbers are 5, 9, 20, 26, 39, 48

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Look for ways to help others and you will be helping yourself. Take a strong position and stick to your convictions. The impression you make will help you weed out those you should not keep in your life. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Stick to what you know and do best. Don't be led astray by anyone with far-reaching ideas but a weak work ethic. You don't want to get stuck holding things together. "No" will be a word to incorporate today. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Take the initiative and you will work your way into a very cushy position that will lead to advancement. A challenge will get you thinking in more diverse ways. Someone may try to muck up your plans, so stay on your toes. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Secrets must be kept if you want to avoid turmoil. Put your efforts into investments, settlements or putting an end to whatever troubles you have been facing. Progress can be made if you use alternative means. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Push for what you want and refuse to let anyone talk you into seeking pleasure rather than production. A deal can be sealed if you are aggressive and to the point. Do not leave room for others to maneuver and you will have your way. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Live, laugh and be merry and you will attract someone who may have thought you were too serious to get to know better. Love is in a high cycle. Make a promise to someone you care about or find a suitable partner, if you are single. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Putting yourself in a vulnerable position will lead to loss. Avoid emotional family issues today and get out with people who relate to your ideas and plans. Self-improvement projects will turn out well. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Put your efforts into doing a little fix-up around your place or putting together a home office. Don't let anyone deter you from following through with your goals. A partnership will develop if you position yourself with people who are like-minded. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Be careful, someone may try to block your plans. Look beyond what others are doing and you will come up with a better way to do things. Be true to yourself and you will attract people who appreciate your candor and talent. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You can fine-tune everything else after you close your current deal. You have the discipline to see any matter through to the end and to be an excellent contender. Confidence will be your weapon. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You may want to keep your thoughts to yourself if you don't want to face opposition today. Someone you cherish will be out of sorts and ready to put you down. Emotional issues must be kept light and playful in order to avoid havoc. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Getting along with others, no matter what, will be to your benefit. Love is likely to take on a new meaning if you reveal your wants, needs and desires. A renewed confidence will emerge if you stand your ground. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are dedicated and loyal to the ones you love. You are a reactionary type person, not a bystander. You look, you see and you do without a second thought.

Eugenia's Web sites: **astroadvice.com** *for fun,* **eugenialast.com** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

			1		3			
		8				9		
	7		2		5		6	
5		6				3		7
9		3				6		8
	4		9		6		1	
		7				8		
			8		4			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	8	5	4	9	3	6	1	7
7	4	6	8	2	1	9	3	5
3	9	1	7	6	5	4	2	8
1	5	4	9	7	6	2	8	3
8	3	2	5	1	4	7	6	9
6	7	9	3	8	2	1	5	4
4	1	8	2	3	9	5	7	6
5	2	7	6	4	8	3	9	1
9	6	3	1	5	7	8	4	2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/13

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

REGENERATIVE MEDICINE **Solution: 6 letters**

R	R	H	E	T	A	R	G	I	M	A	R	R	O	W
R	E	S	T	O	R	E	M	A	I	N	T	A	I	N
C	G	H	S	W	U	A	I	S	O	L	A	T	E	O
A	U	E	C	S	O	N	N	I	T	D	I	D	E	R
R	L	L	S	R	E	R	T	S	M	R	O	V	C	U
D	A	I	T	R	A	C	G	B	F	N	O	O	E	E
I	T	L	V	U	E	E	O	R	O	U	S	M	L	N
A	E	E	L	L	R	V	S	R	I	T	S	I	A	B
C	S	I	L	E	E	E	E	E	P	A	N	I	R	L
V	F	O	N	M	V	N	S	R	R	J	P	E	O	T
E	C	C	Y	J	E	I	M	P	U	L	S	E	S	N
S	E	Z	U	W	E	C	A	R	E	U	S	E	R	R
S	N	A	G	R	O	C	Y	T	L	T	T	I	M	E
E	E	S	L	L	E	C	T	T	Ⓔ	Ⓕ	Ⓐ	Ⓢ	Y	O
L	G	T	R	I	A	L	S	M	E	D	I	C	A	L

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Alleviate, Blood, Cardiac, Care, Cells, Collection, Cost, Cultures, Cure, Donor, Enzyme, Gene, Growth, Impulses, Inject, Injury, Isolate, Life, Live, Maintain, Marrow, Medical, Migrate, Nerves, Neuron, Organ, Process, Regulate, Renew, Repair, Researcher, Restore, Results, Reverse, Safe, Stem, Stromal, Test, Time, Tissue, Transfusion, Trials, Vessel

Yesterday's Answer: Practice

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• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*	
• 1st position	**$10**
• 2nd position	**$3**
• Succeeding positions	**$1**
Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	**$13**
• 2nd position	**$4**
• Succeeding positions	**$2**
Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	**$5**
• More than 6 positions	**$10**

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:

- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 FOOD ATTENDANT
(TH 4673)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursement; transfer permit & workers compensation. Contact: Wall Street Empire, Inc. dba Barbeque Treats @234-3663.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER
(TH 4674)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursement & workers compensation. Contact: Wall Street Empire, Inc. dba Rugs to Riches Manpower @234-3663.

WANTED AVON REPRESENTATIVE
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for more information please call
Jocelyn Jeter
@ 287-9300 C • 483-1097 C
jeter_joy@yahoo.com

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MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust have scheduled a Board of Trustees Regular Meeting for **Friday, February 15, 2008 beginning at 6:00 PM at the Plumeria Room, Saipan World Resort; Saipan, MP**.

The following agenda is hereby established:

I **PRELIMINARIES**
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes

II **CONSULTANT REPORTS**
- Legal Counsel Reports*
- Loan Administrator Reports
  - Transition Matters
- Investment Consultant Reports
  - Flash Reports – January 2007
- Board Consultant Reports
  - Financial Statements – January 2007

III **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**
- Administrative Matters

IV **OLD BUSINESS**

V **NEW BUSINESS**

VI **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

VII **MISCELLANEOUS**

VIII **ADJOURNMENT**

* It is anticipated that the following matters will be discussed under Executive Session in its entirety.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body.

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Alvaro A. Santos
Chairman, Board of Trustees

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 BEAUTICIAN (TH 4675)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; workmens & health expense company provided. Contact: Genoveva's Hair Power Inc. dba Genoveva's Salon for Men & Women @234-6378.

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1 RESTAURANT SUPERVISOR
(TH 4676)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/monthly housing; $100.00/deductible food; workmens & health expenses company provided. Contact: D'Elegance Ent., Inc. dba D'Elegance Rest. @234-9227.

7 COOK (TH 4677)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/monthly housing; $100.00/deductible food; workmens & health expenses company provided. Contact: D'Elegance Ent., Inc. dba D'Elegance Rest. @234-9227.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (TH 4678)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/deductible housing; $100.00/deductible food & medical provided. Contact: Margarita DLG. Castro @235-0627.

1 HOUSEWORKER (TH 4679)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/deductible housing; $100.00/deductible food & medical provided. Contact: Margarita DLG. Castro @235-0627.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (TH 4680)
Salary:$634.46-$900.00/monthly. Benefits: Workmen's compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: G.C.G. & Company, Inc. @322-7166.

2 CARPENTER (TH 4681)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workmen's compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: G.C.G. & Company, Inc. @322-7166.

1 PAINTER (TH 4682)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workmen's compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: G.C.G. & Company, Inc. @322-7166.

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1 INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (TH 4683)
Salary:$3.55-$6.00/hour. Must pass a drug-free periodic test. Able to lift 60lbs. Benefits: $175.00/monthly housing benefits; self provided food; medical insurance coverage & workmens compensation coverage. Contact: Fleet Marine, LLC. dba Fleet Marine Trading @233-0744.

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1 PRIVATE NURSE (TH 4684)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Work compensation. Contact: Salim M. Reza @233-0495.

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1 FARMER (TH 4685)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workmen's & medical coverage. Contact: Juan T. Guerrero & Assoc., Inc. dba GTS Enterprises Inc. @234-8803/04.

2 MASON (TH 4686)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provided food; workmen's & medical coverage. Free transportation to & from work place. Contact: Juan T. Guerrero & Assoc., Inc. dba GTS Enterprises Inc. @234-8803/04.

2 CARPENTER (TH 4687)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provided food; workmen's & medical coverage. Free transportation to & from work place. Contact: Juan T. Guerrero & Assoc., Inc. dba GTS Enterprises Inc. @234-8803/04.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (TH 4688)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; employer provided food; workmen's compensation & medical coverage. Contact: Juan T. Guerrero & Assoc., Inc. @234-8803/4.

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32 SECURITY GUARD
(TH 4689)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided food; medical provided & workmen's compensation coverage. Contact: Juan T. Guerrero & Associates, Inc. dba GTS Security @234-8803/4.

WHATZIT Solution:
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1 ACCOUNTANT (TH 4690)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation & medical coverage. Contact: Juan T. Guerrero & Assoc., Inc. dba Paras Enterprises Saipan @234-8803/4.

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1 ASST. FACTORY MANAGER
(TH 4691)
Salary:$3.55-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

2 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
(TH 4692)
Salary:$3.55-$4.75/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

69 SEWER, HAND (TH 4693)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPERVISOR (TH 4694)
Salary:$3.55-$4.50/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 (BLDG) MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (TH 4695)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 FACTORY MANAGER
(TH 4696)
Salary:$3.55-$5.50/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 SEWING MACHINE MECHANIC (TH 4697)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

6 SEWER, HAND HELPER
(TH 4698)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

2 QUALITY CONTROL CHECKER (TH 4699)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

2 MAINT. MECH. SUPERVISOR
(TH 4700)
Salary:$3.55-$6.30/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

2 INDUSTRIAL ENGINEER
(TH 4701)
Salary:$3.55-$4.50/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 COOK (TH 4702)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 CLERK, GENERAL (TH 4703)
Salary:$3.55-$4.20/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 ASSISTANT WAREHOUSE SUPERVISOR (TH 4704)
Salary:$3.55-$3.90/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 GENERAL MANAGER (TH 4705)
Salary:$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 POWER HOUSE MECHANIC (TH 4706)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical insurance & worker compensation. Contact: Heroge Ent., Inc. dba Diesel Equip Service Retail Diesel Equip @234-3588.

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1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (TH 4707)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; worker compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Heroge Ent., Inc. dba Mountain Fresh Water. @234-3588.

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1 NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANT (TH 4708)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expense reimbursable. Contact: Golden Harvest Int'l School dba School @235-4655.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (TH 4709)
Salary:$3.55-$9.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation; life insurance & medical. Contact: Saipan Shipping Company, Inc. @322-9706/07.

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1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4710)
Salary:$3.05-$3.10/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kumanomi Island Co., Ltd. @233-6298.

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1 SUPERVISOR (TH 4711)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: J.T.M. Corporation @233-5436.

2 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4712)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: J.T.M. Corporation @233-5436.

---

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (TH 4713)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

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1 COOK (TH 4714)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing; workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: M Samwa Planning Ltd. @235-7102.

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1 GRAPHIC ARTIST (TH 4715)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Asia Pacific Industries Inc. @233-9219.

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2 COOK (TH 4716)
Salary:$3.05-$3.30/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kei Enterprises Co., Ltd. @234-3038.

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1 MANAGER (TH 4717)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical benefits. Contact: Sterling Corporation @233-7766.

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1 ART TEACHER (TH 4718)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Chinese Bible Church Int'l Inc. dba Eucon International School @234-3203.

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1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (TH 4719)
Salary:$795.66/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical insurance. Contact: CWM International Inc. dba Eucon International College @234-3203.

---

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (TH 4720)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical; surety bond & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Elite Printing @288-6465.

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1 EDITOR (TH 4721)
Salary:$1,000.00/montly. Benefits: $50.00/housing deduction; self provided food; surety bond; medical & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Island Locator @288-6465.

---

1 ADMIN. ASSISTANT (TH 4722)
Salary:$4.05-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Anthony C. Ayuyu @285-5173

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1 COOK (TH 4723)
Salary:$3.55-$4.45/hour. Benefits: housing company provided at a charge $30.00/month; workers compensation company provided; medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4724)
Salary:$3.55-$3.85/hour. Benefits: housing company provided at a charge $30.00/month; workers compensation company provided; medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

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1 SCUBA DIVING INSTRUCTOR (TH 4725)
Salary:$800.00/monthly. Benefit: medical expenses employer provided; workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Sealovers Saipan Inc. @233-5219.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (TH 4726)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefit: workers compensation company provided; medical expenses company provided. Contact: J.T.M. Corporation @233-5436.

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1 INTERPRETER (TH 4727)
Salary:$3.55-$6.00/hour. Benefit: housing $150.00 allowance; workers compensation; medical insurance. Contact: Anthony R. Stearns, MD dba Marianas Medical Center @234-3926.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (TH 4748)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing none/self provided; food none/self provided; workers compensation and medical provided. Contact: Sablan Topline Company, LLC @235-5206.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (TH 4749)
Salary:$4.50/hour. Benefit: free medical expenses; free workers compensation insurance. Contact: Multi Business Corp. dba Accounting Service, Video Haus, VH Mini Mart, C3 Wholesale Seafood @233-5397.

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3 CUTTER (TH 4750)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing self; food self; company provided workers comp.; medical expenses. Contact: Yong Jih Corp. @288-3889.

9 HAND SEWER (TH 4751)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing self; food self; company provided workers comp.; medical expenses. Contact: Yong Jih Corp. @288-3889.

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1 COOK HELPER (TH 4752)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: medical; workers compensation provided. Contact: Bobbie's Amusement Co. Inc. dba Bobbie's Café @235-2624.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (TH 4753)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; free medical expense; workers compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

3 HAND PACKER (TH 4754)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; free medical expense; workers compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

1 WAREHOUSE WORKER (TH 4755)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; free medical expense; workers compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (TH 4756)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing not provided; food not provided; medical; workers compensation provided. Contact: Pacific Saipan, LLC. Dba Sign Arts @483-1000.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE (TH 4757)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing employee provided; food employee provided; the workers compensation insurance & medical expenses are employer provided. Contact: Hiron Mollah dba Mollah Enterprises @234-3015/285-5547.

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1 RESERVATIONS AGENT (TH 4758)
Salary:$6.00/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; medical; workers compensation. Contact: Sandcastle Saipan, LLC @233-7263.

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1 COMPUTER PROGRAMMER (TH 4759)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; medical; workers compensation. Contact: Danilo T. Aguilar dba Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar @234-8801/235-5466.

1 HOUSE WORKER (TH 4760)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food self arranged; medical. Contact: Danilo T. Aguilar dba Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar @234-8801/235-5466.

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1 WAITER/SERVER/WAITRESS (TH 4761)
Salary:$4.10/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food 2 duty meals; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: WDI Saipan, Inc. dba Tony Roma's/Capricciosa @322-7516.

1 KITCHEN SUPERVISOR (TH 4762)
Salary:$4.70/hour. Benefit: housing self arranged; food 2 duty meals; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: WDI Saipan, Inc. dba Tony Roma's/Capricciosa @322-7516.

1 RESTAURANT MANAGER (GENERAL) (TH 4763)
Salary:$1,770.83/BI-WEEKLY. Benefit: housing self arranged; food 2 duty meals; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: WDI Saipan, Inc. dba Tony Roma's/Capricciosa @322-7516.

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1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4764)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: medical insurance; workers comp. Contact: American K&W Corp. @233-9468.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (TH 4765)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefit: medical insurance; workers comp. Contact: American K&W Corp. @233-9468.

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1 ASSISTANT RESTAURANT MANAGER (TH 4766)
Salary:$461.54/bi-weekly. Benefit: housing free if no A/C; medical insurance; vacation leave; workers compensation. Contact: Triple J Saipan, Inc. dba Truong's Restaurant @234-1795.

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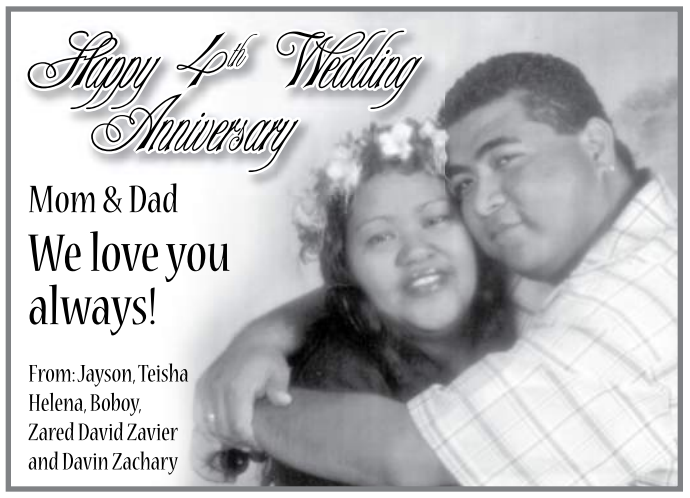

Happy 4th Wedding Anniversary
Mom & Dad
We love you always!
From: Jayson, Teisha Helena, Boboy, Zared David Zavier and Davin Zachary

Pettitte: Clemens revealed HGH use

WASHINGTON (AP)—Roger Clemens told Yankees teammate Andy Pettitte nearly 10 years ago that he used human growth hormone, Pettitte said in a sworn affidavit to Congress, The Associated Press learned Tuesday.

Pettitte disclosed the conversation to the congressional committee holding Wednesday's hearings on drug use in baseball, a person familiar with the affidavit said. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the document had not been made public.

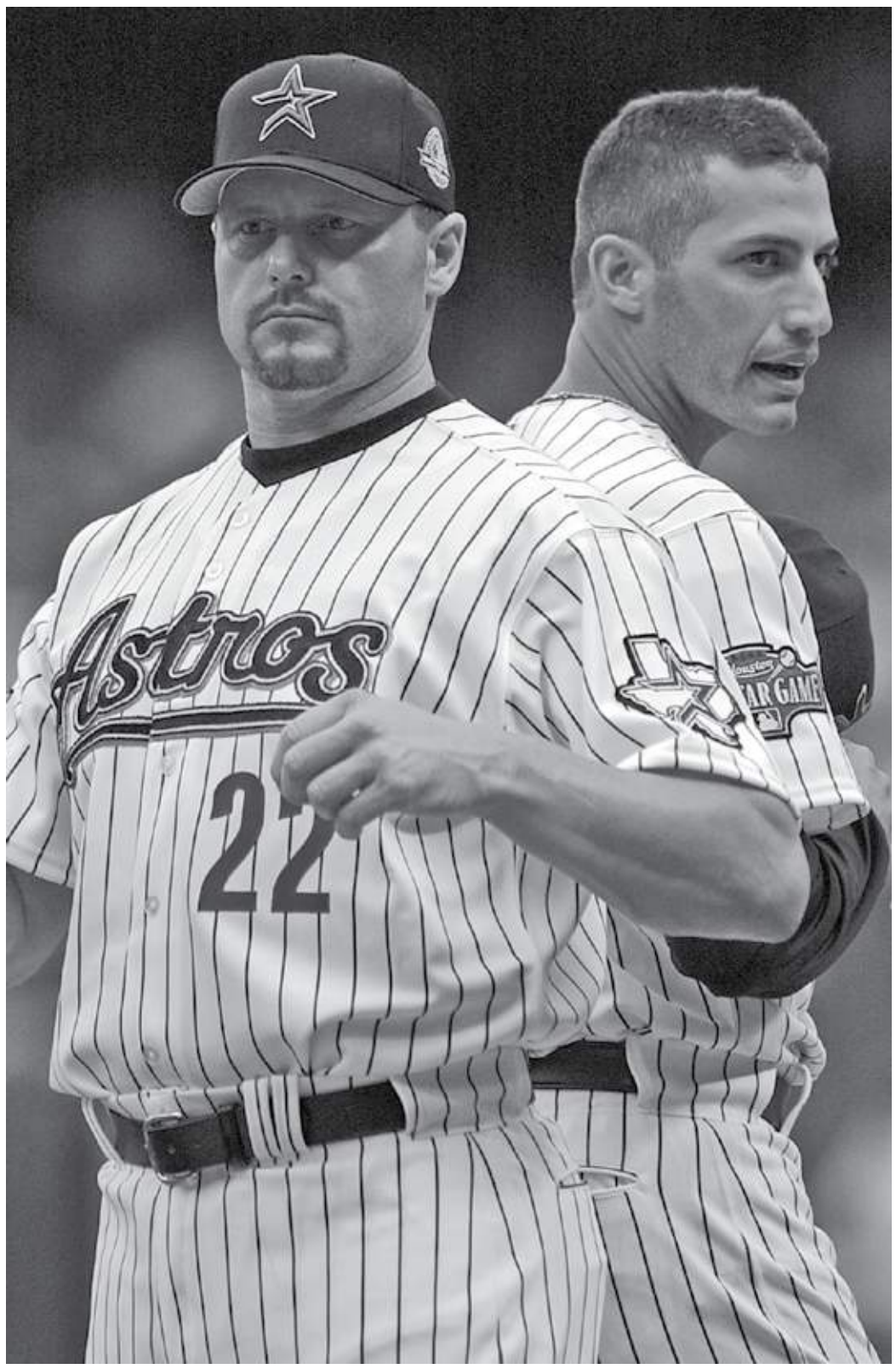
According to the person familiar with the affidavit, who said it was signed Friday night, Pettitte also said Clemens backtracked when the subject of HGH came up again in conversation in 2005, before the same House committee held the first hearing on steroids in baseball.

Pettitte said in the affidavit that he asked Clemens in 2005 what he would do if asked by the media about HGH, given his admission years earlier. According to the account told to the AP, the affidavit said Clemens responded by saying Pettitte misunderstood the previous exchange in 1999 or 2000 and that, in fact, Clemens had been talking about HGH use by his wife in the original conversation.

"We don't know what Andy said," Clemens' lead lawyer, Rusty Hardin, said in a statement e-mailed to the AP by his spokesman. "We look forward to hearing tomorrow."

The existence of the affidavit first was reported by The New York Times. The details of its contents was first reported by the AP.

The news came on the eve of Clemens' much-anticipated appearance to testify before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. His former personal trainer, Brian McNamee, is Wednesday's other main witness. McNamee told baseball investigator George Mitchell that he injected Clemens with steroids and HGH at least 16 times from 1998 to 2001. Clemens repeatedly has denied those allegations, including, he said, under oath in a deposition last week.



AP

Houston Astros pitchers Roger Clemens, left, and Andy Pettitte line up for opening day introductions before their game against the San Francisco Giants in Houston, in this April 5, 2004 file photo.

Pettitte also sat for a deposition at the beginning of last week, and had been scheduled to testify at the hearing. But he asked the committee to allow him to give an affidavit instead of appearing at the hearing, the person familiar with the document said. Pettitte was dropped from the witness list Monday.

McNamee also accused Pettitte of using HGH, and after the Mitchell Report's release in December, Pettitte acknowledged that he did.

On Tuesday, Clemens made the rounds on Capitol Hill one last time, wearing a gray pinstriped suit and squeezing face-to-face meetings into the busy schedules of committee members. He met with five lawmakers over a four-hour span Tuesday, on top of the 19 he saw Thursday and Friday.

"I enjoyed talking with him," said Rep. Diane Watson, D-Calif., who said the discussion included baseball stories and personal accounts about the Sept. 11 attacks. "It's always good to meet the person who is in the spotlight. ... I told him, 'This is not a trial.'"

But it might very well feel like one when Clemens and McNamee sit at the witness table and—under oath—offer what will surely be contradictory versions as to whether Clemens used steroids and HGH.

"I couldn't tell you who's telling the truth," Watson said.

Before Pettitte's affidavit came to light, Clemens got some help in his public relations push from a different ex-teammate Tuesday.

"I have never had a conversation with Clemens in which he expressed any interest in using steroids or human growth hormone," Jose Canseco said in a sworn affidavit, dated Jan. 22, that was submitted to the committee. "Clemens has never asked me to give him steroids or human growth hormone, and I have never seen Clemens use, possess or ask for steroids or human growth hormone."

In his affidavit, Canseco disputes various statements of McNamee's in the Mitchell Report. The affidavit also says "neither Senator Mitchell nor anyone working with him" contacted Canseco to attempt to corroborate things McNamee said.

Canseco's book about steroids in baseball, "Juiced," drew Congress' attention in 2005, leading to that yea hearing.

The anticipation of Wednesday's hearing rivals—if not surpasses—that of the hubbub before March 17, 2005, when Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa and Rafael Palmeiro testified before the same committee in the same wood-paneled House hearing room. McGwire avoided answering questions about steroid use that day by repeatedly saying "I'm not here to talk about the past"—and his reputation has shown no signs of recovery.

"I think Roger's fully prepared to testify fully and truthfully," Hardin said. "He IS here to talk about the past."

McNamee has kept a low profile in the buildup to the hearing. He gave a closed-door deposition under oath last week, two days after Clemens did, and has been waiting until the hearing itself to retell his story.

Clemens didn't have much to say Tuesday as he walked the hallways from appointment to appointment. He said he was getting a chance to meet some "interesting people," and he waved appreciatively when two bystanders yelled: "We love you, Rocket!"

In a late addition to its case, Clemens' camp planned to submit to the committee on Wednesday a letter from a Baylor College of Medicine professor who examined medical records supplied by Hardin's office. The physician, Dr. Bert O'Malley, wrote that the records, which covered Clemens' time with four baseball clubs from April 1995 to August 2007, were "devoid of suspicious indications" of steroid use.

Although some congressmen have emphasized the hearing is not solely about Clemens or even baseball—concern about steroids and substance abuse among young people is the oft-stated mission—the focus on the 45-year-old pitcher became more apparent after several other witnesses were scratched. Like Pettitte, former Clemens teammate Chuck Knoblauch and convicted steroids distributor Kirk Radomski were dropped Monday.

The only scheduled witness besides Clemens and McNamee is Charles Scheeler, a lawyer who helped produce the Mitchell Report.

Livan Hernandez, Twins agree at $5M

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The Minnesota Twins added some seasoning to their suddenly raw rotation.

Right-hander Livan Hernandez agreed Tuesday to a $5 million, one-year contract with the team that could earn him an additional $2 million in performance bonuses, raising the average age for a group ransacked by the departures of Johan Santana and Carlos Silva.

Santana was traded to the New York Mets, and Silva signed with the Seattle Mariners. Another starter from last season, Matt Garza, was dealt to the Tampa Bay Rays.

"If we could find the right guy, we were going to add that," general manager Bill Smith said. "We certainly weren't afraid to go in without veteran starters, but it's going to be give those young players someone to look to."

Last year, Hernandez made $7 million while going 11-11 with a 4.93 ERA in 33 starts for Arizona. He pitched for the Diamondbacks in the NL championship series.

Hernandez, a native of Cuba, has been quite durable over 10-plus years in the majors, logging at least 199 innings each season since 1998. As a rookie in 1997, he won a World Series with the Florida Marlins.

Over the past eight years, the two-time All-Star—who has never pitched in the American League—led the majors with more than 1,837 innings and 32 complete games. He is 134-128 with a 4.25 ERA in 350 career starts.

The Twins have always been against paying big bucks for free-agent pitchers, preferring to develop their own and selectively hand out lucrative contract extensions to some of them.

They've occasionally tried to supplement the staff with relatively cheap veterans, a move that brought them Ramon Ortiz and Sidney Ponson last season.

Though Ortiz and Ponson were only signed for a total of $4.1 million, a portion of which was saved when Ortiz was traded to Colorado in August, they ultimately hurt the team more than they helped.

Ortiz went 3-1 with a 2.57 ERA in his first five starts, but he was banished to the bullpen in late May and finished with a 5.14 ERA and a .298 batting-average against in 91 innings for Minnesota. Ponson was released after going 2-5 with a 6.93 ERA in just seven starts.

In 2003, Twins were successful with a $2 million contract given to Kenny Rogers midway through spring training. Rogers went 13-8 with a 4.57 ERA in 31 starts for the AL Central champions that year.

Smith refused to second-guess the Ortiz and Ponson signings, because they were "good teammates" and allowed for more development in the minors for a pair of prospects who are front-runners for spots in the rotation this spring. Scott Baker replaced Ponson, and Kevin Slowey was called up after Ortiz's demotion.

The Twins committed between $5 million and $7 million toward the belief that Hernandez was worth adding.

Plenty of room remains for the young guys, with Baker, Slowey, Francisco Liriano, Boof Bonser, Nick Blackburn, Phil Humber and possibly Glen Perkins among the myriad candidates for starting spots when spring training begins next week. Bonser and Baker are the most experienced, with 48 major-league starts apiece.

Also, Hernandez and Liriano share the same agent, Greg Genske.

"He'll be a good influence on the rest of the rotation," Smith said. "We're looking forward to having him here, and we're happy to be adding him to our ballclub."

Closer Joe Nathan was a teammate of Hernandez's with San Francisco from 1999-2002. He remembered getting his "butt whipped" on the golf course by Hernandez, who often shot near par. Nathan lamented that Hernandez won't get to bat, other than in interleague road games, because he's a .232 hitter with nine career home runs. In 2001, Hernandez batted .296 in 81 at-bats for the Giants.

Mostly, Nathan was glad to add him to the staff.

"It's not so important to get a veteran guy just to have him there, if he's not going to be at the same level that the younger guy would be," Nathan said. "But you get a guy like this that has proven he throws a ton of innings and knows how to pitch, I think if you can pick up a guy like that, it's a great fit."

Pierce leads Celtics over Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Paul Pierce had 28 points and 12 rebounds, and the short-handed Boston Celtics beat the Indiana Pacers 104-97 Tuesday night to win their fourth straight game.

Ray Allen scored 23 and Leon Powe added 16 points and nine rebounds for the Celtics (40-9), who were playing without injured starters Kevin Garnett and Kendrick Perkins.

Danny Granger had 18 points, 10 rebounds and five blocks, and Shawne Williams scored 14 for the Pacers (21-31). Indiana was playing without injured starters Jermaine O'Neal and Jamaal Tinsley.

AP

Boston Celtics forward Paul Pierce (34) is defended by Indiana Pacers' Jeff Foster as he puts up a shot during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Indianapolis, Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2008.

Pistons 94, Hawks 90

At Atlanta, Chauncey Billups came through when it mattered, scoring 12 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter to rally Detroit to its ninth win in a row.

Rasheed Wallace carried the Pistons in the early going, scoring 15 straight points for his team in the first quarter and finishing with 21. The Hawks lost their third in a row despite 30 points from Josh Smith.

Billups went 0-for-8 from the field through the first three quarters, but he looked more like himself in the fourth. He ripped off 10 straight points for Detroit, including a couple of 3s, turning a three-point deficit into an 89-86 lead with 2:25 remaining.

Nets 92, Timberwolves 88

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Bostjan Nachbar came off the bench in the second half and scored 10 of his 14 points in a decisive spurt for New Jersey.

Vince Carter added 17 points and 10 assists and Jason Kidd had nine points, nine assists and 10 rebounds in just missing his 100th triple-double. Richard Jefferson added 13 points and 12 rebounds as the Nets won their third straight game.

Sebastian Telfair scored 24 points and Al Jefferson added 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who lost for the 23rd time in 25 road games this season.

Nuggets 114, Heat 113, OT

At Miami, J.R. Smith made a career-best eight 3-pointers and scored 28 points, Kenyon Martin added 24, and Denver won its third straight.

Carmelo Anthony scored six of his 22 points in overtime for Denver. Dwyane Wade scored a game-high 29 points, but missed a 22-footer at the buzzer for Miami—which has lost eight straight and 23 of its last 24 games.

Grizzlies 107, Kings 94

At Memphis, Hakim Warrick had 24 points and 13 rebounds—both season-high totals—to help Memphis snap a six-game losing streak and win for the first time since trading Pau Gasol to the Lakers on Feb. 1.

Memphis (14-37) had gone 0-4 since Gasol's departure. Rudy Gay added 21 points for the Grizzlies, reserve Juan Carlos Navarro scored 19 and Mike Miller finished with 17 points and 10 rebounds.

Kevin Martin scored 26 of his 33 points in the first half and Ron Artest and Mike Bibby had 18 apiece.

Hornets 100, Bulls 86

At Chicago, Chris Paul had 25 points and 14 assists to help send Chicago to its sixth loss in nine games.

David West added 27 points for the Hornets and Tyson Chandler, who played five seasons for the Bulls before being traded before the 2006-07 season, was booed throughout the game and scored four points and had 16 rebounds.

Andres Nocioni led the Bulls with 28 points and Kirk Hinrich finished with 15 points.

Shaq unlikely to play Wednesday

PHOENIX (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal doesn't want to slow the Phoenix Suns.

That's why he may make them wait a few more days before playing his eagerly awaited first game debut in purple and orange.

O'Neal, who is learning a new offense and working his way into shape after a hip injury, is unlikely to play when the Suns visit Golden State on Wednesday night. After returning from the Bay Area, the team will decide whether O'Neal will play against Dallas on Thursday night in Phoenix.

"I want to be a little more in tune before I step out on the court, because as you watch this team without me, they're like a great flowing machine," O'Neal said after practice Tuesday at US Airways Center. "I don't want to be the kink in the machinery."

If O'Neal doesn't play this week, his debut could come on Feb. 20 against his former team, the Los Angeles Lakers. Phoenix plays host to its Pacific Division rival in the first game after the All-Star break.

O'Neal, who has been out since Jan. 21 with a hip injury, went through his second Suns practice on Tuesday morning, participating in a full-court workout before the team left for California in the afternoon.

"I haven't done anything in a month and a half," O'Neal said. "I'm in great human shape. I'm in OK basketball shape. I've just got to get into basketball shape."

Coach Mike D'Antoni said the team would make a decision on O'Neal's availability for the game against the Warriors after an individual workout before the game, but it appears doubtful that O'Neal will play.

"He's not quite ready," D'Antoni said. "He wants to be comfortable with the offense. He knows it's going to be a big splash when he goes out the first time."

D'Antoni said it's "possible" O'Neal could play against the Mavericks on Thursday night.

O'Neal injured his hip diving for a loose ball against Utah on Dec. 22. He returned Jan. 16 but was sidelined again five days later. An MRI showed inflammation in the left hip, shutting him down from all basketball activity.

Phoenix is 2-1 since the trade last Wednesday that brought O'Neal from the Miami Heat for Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks. The Suns have the conference's best record at 36-15, but a pack of pursuers isn't far behind.

Goodell, Specter to discuss Spygate issue

NEW YORK (AP)—NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and Sen. Arlen Specter are to meet Wednesday to discuss the Spygate case involving the New England Patriots.

The NFL said Tuesday the afternoon meeting will take place in Specter's office in Washington. The Pennsylvania Republican has asked Goodell to explain his decision to destroy the tapes and notes from the case, which go back to 2002.

Patriots coach Bill Belichick was fined $500,000 and the team was fined $250,000. The Patriots also forfeited a first-round draft pick.

Specter's challenge to Goodell came two days before the Super Bowl, lost by the Patriots to the New York Giants on Feb. 3.

The top-ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee questioned the quality of the NFL investigation that followed the illegal taping of the New York Jets' defensive signals in the opening week of this season as well as the commissioner's decision to destroy video evidence uncovered by the league. He has raised the possibility of congressional hearings if he wasn't satisfied with Goodell's answers.

In defending the destruction of the notes, Goodell said "there was no purpose to them at all." Specter said Goodell's response "didn't make any sense at all" and also questioned whether there might have been illegal acts by the Patriots before the 2005 Super Bowl, when they beat the Philadelphia Eagles.

The punishment went beyond the confiscated Jets tapes. The tapes and notes dated as far back as 2002 and the NFL said in October that Belichick acknowledged to Goodell that there had been spying since he became New England's coach in 2000.

Last week at the Pro Bowl, Goodell was asked why only six tapes were confiscated by the NFL's security department.

"That's what they had," he replied. "My guess is that they taped over some of those from time to time. That's what video departments do. They did it more than six times because there were notes that reflected that."

NFL officials also said the investigation didn't find any illegal taping or other spying during the playoffs or the three Super Bowls the Patriots won in 2002, 2004 and 2005.

Matt Walsh, the former Patriots assistant coach who performed some videotaping duties for the team, said last week during the Pro Bowl in Hawaii that he couldn't talk about allegations that he taped a walkthrough practice by the St. Louis Rams before the 2002 Super Bowl. New England, a two-touchdown underdog, won that game 20-17.

He would not say if he had been contacted by the league or by Specter's office.

"We were aware of this before," Goodell said, referring to 2002 allegations. "We pursued it and weren't able to get any information that was credible. We were aware of some of the rumors and we pursued some of them and we continue that. From Day 1, I said if we feel there is new information that's inconsistent with what we've been told (by the Patriots), I reserve the right to reopen it.

Vikings DE Udeze has form of leukemia

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP)—Minnesota Vikings defensive end Kenechi Udeze has a form of leukemia, which is cancer of the blood and bone marrow, a person with the team confirmed Tuesday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the information. The Vikings declined to comment, but they issued a statement from coach Brad Childress that didn't specifically address Udeze's condition.

"We respect the privacy of Kenechi. The thoughts and prayers of the entire Minnesota Vikings organization are with Kenechi and his family," the statement read.

Two Twin Cities television stations first reported the news on Monday night. KSTP-TV, without citing a source, reported that the 24-year-old Udeze was undergoing tests to determine the severity of the disease. Ethan Lock, Udeze's agent, declined to comment.

Without details about how quickly the cancer was identified or what form of leukemia Udeze has, there's no way of knowing a prognosis.

Generally, it's a serious disease that can be fatal and takes a lot of time to fight. The upcoming season is in question for Udeze, who was drafted out of Southern California in the first round in 2004. He started 15 games last year for the Vikings and tied his career high with five sacks.

Dr. Mark Reding, a University of Minnesota Cancer Center and Medical School hematologist who does not have specific knowledge of Udeze's case, said there are two forms of leukemia, chronic and acute.

People under 65 are almost always diagnosed with the acute form, which requires aggressive chemotherapy. Younger and healthier patients have a wider range of treatment options, Reding said, but from diagnosis to remission the process often takes at least six months.

"Just because somebody's a pro athlete doesn't mean they're going to take it any better than you or I are," Reding said. "This will kick anybody in the teeth, the kind of chemo we're talking about."

A statement of support from USC coach Pete Carroll was posted on his official Web site.

"Kenechi's got a big battle on his hands," Carroll said. "We've been talking with him, and we will continue to support him and send our good wishes and prayers his way. We know he's going to come through strong and compete against this disease like a warrior, like he always has competed."

Vikings safety Darren Sharper offered his support, too.

"It's a tough situation, and he's going to have to continue to battle and fight," Darren Sharper told KSMP-TV, the other station that initially reported the news.

Knecht highlights football's benefits

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association vice president and youth committee chair Sue Knecht said learning the sport not only gives you a fun time, but will also keep you healthy and fit.

Knecht said having a healthy lifestyle is timely since the CNMI is experiencing a sudden increase in the rate of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and all other complications of these serious health conditions.

"It make sense that parents urge their children to abandon a sedentary lifestyle and play a game which cannot only improve their physical conditioning but also establishes a life-long passion."

Knecht said football will not only help the kids to have a healthy lifestyle but it will also teach them social skills. "[Learning football] is great fun and develops a sense of pride, and community involvement. [Football] instills good sportsmanship and a life-long love for physical exercise."

JON PEREZ
Amber Roberts dribbles the ball in this file photo taken in one of their games in the Women's Recreational Football League. Roberts is one of the products of the youth program of the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association.

She is inviting parents and the rest of the community to watch and observer the games every weekend in order to learn football.

Knecht said experience is not necessary since some of the players only learn the sport here on Saipan. "You will find that once you play or coach it leaves you waiting for the next practice, over and over again."

She said NMIFA is aggressive in bringing the sport closer to the community and one way of doing that is by establishing clubs for easy practicing and playing.

"Anyone can learn the sport, its rules and play the game. It requires nothing more than a couple of cones, a ball, shin guards, and a little effort," Knecht said.

She also invited other athletes who are into multisports to join them if their leagues are in the off-season since most of the youth players play a number of other sports.

NMIFA divides its leagues into two seasons beginning the year with games from January to April and the second half is from August to November. Both seasons last more than 12 weeks.

Budweiser King of the Lanes this Feb. 17 and 18

The February Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes resumes next week at the Saipan Capital Bowling Center in Garapan.

The two-day Budweiser January King and Queen of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament will be held in Feb. 17 and 18, Sunday and Monday.

Sunday's roll-off would begin as early as 4pm, while Monday's competition, starts at 6pm. Registration starts 30 minutes prior to game time. Awarding ceremonies immediately follow the end of competition on Monday.

The competition is exclusive for SBA members with participants limited to the first 72 entries for each day.

Members have the option to bowl on the Sunday or Monday, or on both days, provided that the $15 entry fee is paid. Bowlers who did not bowl on Sunday will be given priority for the Monday shift. Only the higher score will count for the tournament. All participants have to pay the $15 SBA annual membership fee.

The champion is guaranteed $100 in prize money but it could go up to as much $150 depending on the number of participants. Women participants will only have separate prizes if there are at least 10 entries.

Youth bowlers (12 to 19 years old, not bowling in any leagues or averaging less than 160 in any league) will only bowl on Sunday for the Prince and Princess of the Lanes. Entry fee is $10.

After being sponsor-less for the whole of 2007, the Saipan Bowling Association's monthly King and Queen of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament as well as its season-ending bowlfest has secured the help of MARPAC for this year's competition.

The Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament aims to crown 12 monthly champions through the course of the year.

For early registration and payment for the February tournaments, see or contact Gigi Zapanta at 288-5627or e-mail zapanta@pticom.com. ***(Mark Rabago)***

NMIFA

From Page 28

to raise $500,000 to begin the first phase of their three-phase plan. "We [NMIFA] will have to finalize with the EAFF on how we can get funding. We will immediately layout the groundwork."

He said that phase one alone could take them from 18 to 24 months to finish. "Our next move is to put into action the development of the property. We would begin with phase one immediately and once the groundwork is complete we will begin with phase two. It is a10-year master plan.

Tan said NMIFA will work closely with the Guam Football Association in the design of the Koblerville facility and consult them on what would be their next step.

NMIFA, in a letter to Fitial, requested the land proposing that it would transform it to a modern football practice and game facility.

Fitial said his administration is supporting programs that would benefit the community. "Especially sports programs that will promote the health and well being of our people."

He said that having the facility on island will make the CNMI attractive to other sports organizations that may need a training venue for their athletes or a facility for competitive games from the Commonwealth's neighbors in the Asia-Pacific.

"As part of our commitment, the government will contribute $500,000 to NMIFA in support of the program envisioned by the association to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed Koblerville [Football] Stadium provided NMIFA will equally match the government's commitment towards this project."

DEADLINE

From Page 28

of the Marianas Cup [a youth] portion to the event. Managaha [also has] some of the softest sand on the islands at our disposal for a great volleyball event."

The 14-and-under tournament will be a four-person event, while the Under-17 division is a two-person match.

The adult division of the Marianas Cup will have exhibition games in two-person matches in the men's and women's divisions, the professionals will also hold clinics during the three-day Marianas Cup.

More than 90 players from Hawaii, California, Japan, Guam, Korea, Italy, Russia, and the CNMI have already participated in the Marianas Cup in the last three years.

The event is approved by the FIVB and USA Volleyball and is listed in the FIVB website as a country-against-country tournament.

For more information about the Marianas Cup, call Cramer 234-7976 or email him at seaexec@picsaipan.com.

MIEKO

From Page 28

Carey, who finished seventh overall among amateur participants and fourth in the 25-29 age group of 2007 XTERRA World Championship in Hawaii, would like to thank her friends and supporters for helping her train and compete in the 2008 Saipan Sportsfest.

"I would like to thank Joshua Berger first and foremost. He is sponsoring me with gear and fees. I want to thank him very much because he has also been helping me with my road bike. Special thanks also go out to Nate, Kieran (Daly), Russ (Quinn), Ken, coach Michael, and my husband Kevin. We are also going to Guam for the XTERRA there and we hope many people from Saipan will join us," she said.

Carey also added that she is already looking forward to share the starting line with world class triathletes like Julie Dibens of Great Britain, Renata Bucher of Switzerland, and Andy Noble of Australia. Dibens and Noble won last year's Tagaman and Bucher, along with Swiss Machine Olivier Marceau, won the 2007 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

The 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km bike, and 12-km run XTERRA Saipan Championship will be held on March 8.

It will treat world class triathletes to a swim in the clear warm waters of the Philippine Sea, a bike on coral roads and single-track, and a run through jungle and caves while passing World War II relics. The race starts and ends at Micro Beach.

The 2-km swim, 60-kim bike, and 15-km run Tagaman, meanwhile, will take place a week later on March 15. It begins at Pacific Islands Club and traverses the entire 15-mile length of the island of Saipan.

Aside from the XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon, the 2008 Saipan Sportfest will also feature the annual Sophia Walk, an XTERRA bike race, and Taga Kids.

TIGHT

From Page 28

card. CH Hammer and Home Boyz remains within striking distance with their 4-4 records.

Beach Jammers finally ended their six-game slide sweeping the two games they played on Tuesday to improve their record to 2-6, while Ma Numel'u is still winless after eight tries to remains at the cellar.

Beach Jammers opened up the games with a 23-25, 25-16, 15-12 win over Ma Numel'u then closed out the day with a straight sets 20-25, 25-18, 16-14 victory against Fanians.

The Jammers lost a tightly contested first set against Ma Numel'u, but bounced back in the second set when they built an 8-0 lead and never looked back after that to force a deciding third set.

They never let the game slip away as they continued to pound Ma Numel'u a number of times earning their points on timely placed spikes and drop shots.

No Fear, meanwhile, handed Menudo its second loss in eight games after pulling off a 25-20, 22-25, 15-12 triumph that improved their record to 5-3.

In the other game, Ol'Aces trounced Islanders, 25-9, 20-25, 15-12.

It was a different story in the women's division as Pikan Gaga continued to mow down the opposition, adding YoYo's as their latest victim, 25-20, 25-20, 15-11.

The win was the sixth straight for Pikan Gaga to remain on top of the five-team field followed by the Beach Jammers' 3-3 mark in second place. Seikid holds a 2-3 slate, while YoYo's dropped to a 2-4 card. Ta Chagi completed the standings with their 1-5 record to remain in fifth place.

The Jammers overcame a first set loss to escape with a 23-25, 25-19, 15-11 decision against Ta Chagi.

Action continues today in the men's division with Fanians taking on the Islanders at 6pm, while Menudo battles CH-Hammer in the 7pm second match and will be followed by the Ma Numel'u-Ol'Aces game at 8pm. No Fear closes out the day when they face home Boyz in the 9pm nightcap.

In the women's division, Sekid clashes with Ta Chagi at 6pm, while Beach Jammers trade spikes and digs with YoYo's at 7pm.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	40	9	.816	_
Toronto	27	23	.540	13 1/2
New Jersey	23	29	.442	18 1/2
Philadelphia	22	30	.423	19 1/2
New York	15	36	.294	26

Southeast Division

Orlando	32	21	.604	_
Washington	24	27	.471	7
Atlanta	21	27	.438	8 1/2
Charlotte	18	34	.346	13 1/2
Miami	9	41	.180	21 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	38	13	.745	_
Cleveland	29	22	.569	9
Indiana	21	31	.404	17 1/2
Chicago	20	31	.392	18
Milwaukee	19	33	.365	19 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	35	15	.700	_
Dallas	34	17	.667	1 1/2
San Antonio	33	17	.660	2
Houston	31	20	.608	4 1/2
Memphis	14	37	.275	21 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	33	19	.635	_
Denver	32	19	.627	1/2
Portland	28	23	.549	4 1/2
Seattle	13	37	.260	19
Minnesota	10	40	.200	22

Pacific Division

Phoenix	36	15	.706	_
L.A. Lakers	34	17	.667	2
Golden State	31	20	.608	5
Sacramento	23	27	.460	12 1/2
L.A. Clippers	17	32	.347	18

Yesterday's Games

Detroit 94, Atlanta 90
Boston 104, Indiana 97
Denver 114, Miami 113, OT
New Jersey 92, Minnesota 88
Memphis 107, Sacramento 94
New Orleans 100, Chicago 86

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

NMIVA Indoor Standings

Men's Division

	W	L	PF	PA	SW
Menudo	6	2	498	381	19
Fanians	5	3	477	436	15
No Fear	5	3	495	465	14
Islanders	5	3	442	459	12
Ol'Aces	5	3	476	476	12
CH-Hammer	4	4	471	443	13
Home Boyz	4	4	461	459	13
Beach Jammers	2	6	429	499	6
Ma Numel'u	0	8	391	520	4

Women's Division

Pikan Gaga	6	0	380	320	13
Beach Jammers	3	3	326	357	8
Seikid	2	3	285	296	8
YoYo's	2	4	349	356	7
Ta Chagi	1	4	281	292	6

PF-Points scored by team
PA-Points scored against team
SW-Sets won

BANMI fetes Bud Cup winners

JON PEREZ

Suns guard Elmer Esdrelon, left, beats Rock Steady's Mark Wallace, partly hidden, in a drive toward the basket in their championship match last Feb. 1.

JON PEREZ

Rock Steady's James Villacrusis, right, tries to block a shot by Edsel Mendoza of Saipan Stevedore Suns in their championship match last Feb. 1.

JON PEREZ

Mark Wallace, left, of Rock Steady, slips out of the Suns' Elmer Esdrelon's defense.

JON PEREZ

The Suns' Steve Rasa, left, tries to look for an open teammate as Mark Walalce, center, and Sivas Awes defend in their championship match last Feb. 1.

Far left, a representative of Telesource Proa, second from left, receives the sportsmanship award from BANMI president Elias Rangamar, left, and BANMI referees director Rufino Aguon. Looking on is Rock Steady assistant coach Ed Manalili.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Left, Ol'Aces center Abong Camacho, left, receives the pennant trophy from BANMI president Elias Rangamar.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands held its award banquet last Saturday honoring the top teams and individual performers of the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League.

BANMI officials, led by president Elias Rangamar, were present to hand over the championship trophy to Rock Steady.

Rock Steady eclipsed the Saipan Stevedore Suns, 92-78, in their finals match on Feb. 1 to win the Bud Cup.

The Suns won second place, while the Sonics and the CNMI Junior Nationals finished third and fourth in the finals after making it into the Final Four.

Ol'Aces had a league-best 11-1 win-loss record to win the pennant, but was knocked out in the playoffs after suffering consecutive upset losses from D-1 Ulloa's, 93-104, and the Junior Nationals, 93-115. Proa earned the sportsmanship award.

CNMI Junior Nationals' Jericho Cruz was named the regular season most valuable player, while also taking home the scoring title after averaging 28.3 points per game.

Sivas Awes of Rock Steady earned the finals MVP for his heads-up plays in the championship to help his team secure the title.

Awes grabbed crucial rebounds that helped Rock Steady score second chance points. He also made timely baskets and his presence at the paint forced the Suns to change their shots.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Coach Rufino Aguon, right, joins Rock Steady members, from right, James Lee, Joe Villacrusis, Andres "Jhun" Estolas Jr. (kneeling), Mark Wallace, Kelvin Fitial, and assistant coach Ed Manalili for a group photo in last Saturday's banquet for the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI Junior Nationals' Jericho Cruz, center, displays his regular season most valuable player and scoring champion trophies. Others in photo are, from left, Ed Manalili and BANMI president Elias Rangamar.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Bombers' Spencer Johnson, left, joins Rock Steady players in filling their plate with food prepared for the banquet.

Players fill up their plates with food.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BANMI fetes Bud Cup winners

The Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands held its award banquet last Saturday honoring the top teams and individual performers of the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Pettitte: Clemens revealed HGH use

Roger Clemens told Yankees teammate Andy Pettitte nearly 10 years ago that he used human growth hormone, Pettitte said in a sworn affidavit to Congress, The Associated Press learned Tuesday.

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NMIFA finally finds a home

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A state-of-the-art football facility will soon rise in southernmost village of Saipan after Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Department of Public Lands Secretary John Del Rosario yesterday signed a land title transfer to the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

Present to witness the signing at the Governor's Office conference room in Capital Hill were Northern Mariana Islands Football Association officials led by president Jerry Tan, vice president Sue Knecht, secretary general Wes Bogdan, and treasurer Vicki Izuka as well as DCCA acting secretary Melvin O. Faisao.

The land in Koblerville, measuring, 8.4 hectares, will be for NMIFA's exclusive use as they begin a three-phase process of building a state-of-the-art football facility that will have bleachers, house two adult-size pitches, at least two youth-size fields, two futsal facilities, locker and shower rooms, and a building that will house the association's office and training center.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signs the agreement designating a land for the proposed Koblerville Football Stadium yesterday at the Governor's Office conference room on Capital Hill.

DCCA will be the custodian of the land as NMIFA and the government prepares a three-phase process of building the facility. "Football is becoming very popular on Saipan and we are excited about it. The government will do whatever it can to help in the construction of the [Koblerville football complex]," said Fitial.

"I met with [East Asian Football Federation] officials when they came to Saipan a few years ago and the interest is high to support us in football development."

Fitial said China, Japan, and Korea represent the backbone of EAFF and a modern football facility in the CNMI would attract foreign teams to practice on Saipan. "It will attract international competition and it will enhance our economy."

Tan said NMIFA will be working on a 10-year plan where their first thing to do is

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Mieko gears up for Sportsfest

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Mieko Carey is gearing up for this year's 7th Annual XTERRA Saipan Championship and 19th Tagaman Triathlon by training six days a week.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Japan-born, Saipan-based triathlete Mieko Carey is gearing up for this year's Saipan Sportsfest by training six days a week.

Carey, who is being sponsored by the Joshua Berger Law Office, said she is looking forward to compete in this year's 7th Annual XTERRA Saipan Championship and 19th Tagaman Triathlon.

"I am training six days a week. I usually do mountain biking with the morning crew followed by a run three days a week. Coach Michael (Stewart) has set me up with a great swim workout at Marpi. I do that three-four days a week. On the weekends, my husband and I do sprint training either at the track or at the soccer field near the airport," she said in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

She noted that like years past, her goal is to finish first place in her age group in the XTERRA Saipan Championship, as it would give her another trip to Maui.

Carey also set a loftier goal for herself this year, which is to beat one of the islands' top male triathletes.

"My primary goal for XTERRA is to finish first in my age this year to qualify for Maui. My other goal is to beat Nate "The Snake" Hawley. He has been pushing me very hard this year, but he is in great shape and should do very well," she said.

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Tight race seen in men's league

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A tight race for the championship is expected in the men's division of the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League after results of Tuesday night's games at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium saw a four-way tie behind league-leading Menudo.

Fanians, No Fear, Islanders, and Ol'Aces are tied from second to fifth place with similar 5-3 slates just half-a-game behind Menudo's 6-2 win-loss

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JON PEREZ
A Beach Jammers player, right, spikes the ball while a member of Ma Numel'u tries to block it in their Tuesday night game in the men's division of the Indoor Volleyball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Deadline today for Under-14 beach volley meet

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Teams that will be competing for the youth division of the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival are given up to 1pm today to sign up or confirm their participation.

The event will start with a 14-and-under and 17-and-under beach volleyball tournaments on Feb. 16 at Managaha Island. The Marianas Cup will be held from Feb. 22 to 24 at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

This marks the first time that organizers will hold a youth tournament on Managaha Island. TASI Tours will provide transportation and food to all participants.

Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association secretary Laurie Peterka is advising teams to get in touch with NMIVA president Jon Cramer to submit their team name and roster so they could finalize the number of competing squads.

Peterka said they need the final number of participants in order to finalize their arrangement with Tasi Tours, which will provide transportation to and from Managaha Island and lunch to all players.

Cramer said holding youth beach volleyball games at Managaha Island is new for NMIVA. "We have an exciting opportunity to start something new as part

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